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Thomas W. Bicknell

THE HISTORY  
OF THE STATE OF  
RHODE ISLAND  
AND  
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

BY  
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VOLUME I.

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## FOREWORD

It is finished. This history, begun in my eighty-third year, 1917, was completed in my eighty-fifth, and the FOREWORD runs into my eighty-sixth.

To Rhode Island rightly belongs the honor of establishing and illustrating, in a well organized commonwealth, the principles of civil and religious freedom, for the first time in the history of the world. The principle was not original with our Rhode Island founders. The struggle for soul freedom was centuries old, its fate sealed in fire and blood. A new world was needed for the expression of liberty under law—of the release of the freeman from his tyrant master.

Four years ago (1915) I wrote and published "THE STORY OF DR. JOHN CLARKE." That work was the revelation of a new chapter in American history. In it I attempted to show that the founding of the towns of Portsmouth and Newport on the Island of Rhode Island, respectively in 1638 and 1639, and the organization of the Colony of Rhode Island in 1640-41, were the first organic, wisely directed and successful ventures in civil and religious Democracy, a Free Church in a Free State. In the four years that have elapsed, while I have received many endorsements of my position, I have yet to read the first vital criticism of my position.

*That work declared Dr. John Clarke of Newport, and not Roger Williams of Providence, the founder of the modern Democratic State, with freedom in religious concerns, its chief corner stone.*

A few years ago, in conversation with the chief professor in history of a New England college, I boldly asked, "Did Roger Williams ever clearly avow the principles and doctrine of Civil and Religious Liberty before his banishment from Massachusetts Bay Colony?" His reply startled me. "No, and he never did afterwards." I was prepared for the "No," but not for climax, "He never did afterwards."

A little later I met an historical leader, the chief of a National Historical Institution, and asked him, "Was not Dr. John Clarke of Rhode Island the first expounder of Civil and Religious Liberty in New England?" The oracle replied, "PURSUE," and I have pursued, and the four volumes of the History of Rhode Island are the result of that quest.

For sixty-five years my life was devoted to educational pursuits,—my own preparatory, and then constructive work for others in State and Nation. History and genealogy were delightful avocations from the first. My first historic flight was to the ridge-pole of my father's attic,

where by the light through an open scuttle I first saw the autographs of Governors Greene and Stephen Hopkins and that of Samuel Ward, Secretary of State and Acting Governor, on Colonial Commissions. It was a childhood dream that I might write a history.

The last twenty years since my return to Providence have afforded me time and opportunity for study, reflection and clear conclusions on questions problematical and debatable in historic circles on Rhode Island history. In the babel of writings of accepted historical authorities, I found a reason for studying the original documents as the basis of correct historical judgments. With the same facts to deal with, how was it possible for a jury of twelve honest men to reach twelve honest but different verdicts? Several reasons occurred to me—among them were different view-points, differing understanding of the facts, different interpretation of motives of action, self-interest, temperament, social, civil or religious bias, personal relations, *et cetera*. From such variants, consequents differ.

This history of Rhode Island is, in all important features, my own work. It is in many ways a new revelation of events and consequently revolutionary in its conclusions. I have endeavored honestly to discover historic facts and to record correct judgments thereon.

In order to understand aright my interpretation of Rhode Island history, the following guides must be followed:

FIRST—RHODE ISLAND WAS RHODE ISLAND ON THE ISLAND OF AQUIDNECK, AND NOT PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS AT THE HEAD OF NARRAGANSETT BAY.

SECOND—BOSTON, IN THE BAY COLONY, WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN AMERICA AND IN THE WORLD IN THE LIBERAL SCHOOL OF ANNE HUTCHINSON.

THIRD: THE FIRST COMPACT IN THE WORLD, LOOKING TO THE FOUNDING OF "A BODIE POLITICK," ON THE BROAD PLATFORM OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, WAS SIGNED IN BOSTON, MARCH 7, 1638, BY WILLIAM CODDINGTON, DR. JOHN CLARKE, AND TWENTY-ONE OTHERS.

FOURTH—THIS COMPACT TOOK AN ORGANIC FORM AND PRACTICAL ACCOMPLISHMENT AT POCASSET (PORTSMOUTH), ON AQUIDNECK, ON THE 13TH DAY OF MAY, 1638, IN THE SETTLEMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST TOWN FOUNDED IN RHODE ISLAND.

FIFTH—NEWPORT, ON RHODE ISLAND, FOUNDED ON THE SAME PRINCIPLES AS PORTSMOUTH, WAS ORGANIZED AND SET UP A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT ON THE 28TH OF APRIL, 1639.

SIXTH—IN 1640, THE TWO TOWNS UNITED TO FORM A COLONIAL GOVERNMENT, AND IN 1641 THIS "BODIE POLITICK" WAS DECLARED A DEMOCRACIE," UNDER MAJORITY RULE, AND "THAT NONE BEE ACCOUNTED A DELINQUENT FOR DOCTRINE."

SEVENTH—At Providence, Roger Williams organized no town, as the settlers were averse to “Magistrates,” but did form a Proprietary, or land corporation, which continued its life nearly two centuries. A Proprietary was a business enterprise without civil or religious functions.

EIGHTH—At some unknown date, Richard Scott and others petitioned to be admitted to the Proprietary, to be governed by the rules of that body, “only in civil things.” This paper has been erroneously styled “A Compact for Civil and Religious Freedom.”

NINTH—Providence was not incorporated as a town until 1649, thirteen years after the coming of Roger Williams, in 1636. Town officers were then elected for the first time and town government instituted, but no record exists of any declaration of rights or of foundation principles of government. At that date Mr. Williams was residing at the trading post at Narragansett.

These are a few of the great basic facts, of which this new history is the development. While Mr. Williams is recognized as an interesting early Colonial figure, he cannot long hold the primacy accorded him for a century, against the protests of men who were his immediate successors. Dr. John Clarke is the real hero of that heroic time, and the real Rhode Island of Colonial days was Rhode Island on Aquidneck, the scene of his great labors, not Providence Plantations, the home of Mr. Williams.

An honor, second to none perhaps, belongs to Roger Williams. His friendly relations with the Narragansetts and his intervention in preventing the alliance of this great New England tribe with the warlike Pequots and Mohawks, saved the utter annihilation of the New England Colonies in 1637. As the Saviour of the infant Colonies, Mr. Williams is entitled to all honor, for he jeopardized his own life to save the new civilization.

My indebtedness is so large and widespread that a chapter would be required for full acknowledgment. From Winthrop's journal and Williams' letters to the latest discovered MSS. covers a period of nearly three centuries, and a vast field of printed and MSS. historic literature. Of course, Arnold's “History of Rhode Island” (1853), as the most complete and reliable annalist record, has been always at hand, as have the ten volumes of “Rhode Island Colonial Records” (1863).

My Advisory Board, eminent in scholarship and in civil and ecclesiastical distinction, has been generous in criticism and just in treatment. Their names are worthy of historic transmission. Correspondence with various of its members has been frequent and valuable. Among those who have contributed advisory assistance are the following named: U. S. Senator LeBaron B. Colt, LL.D.; Mr. Walter Allen Read, General Treasurer of Rhode Island; the Rev. Gaius G. Atkins,

D.D., author and litterateur; Walter E. Ranger, LL.D., Commissioner of Public Schools; Mr. Charles Sisson; Rev. Peter E. Blessing, D.D.; Mr. Richard W. Jennings; Mr. George A. Moriarty, Jr., historian and genealogist; Mr. Roswell B. Burchard, historian and antiquarian; Dr. Edward M. Harris; Mr. Frank E. Fitzsimmons; Rev. Edward Holyoke, D.D.; and Misses Elizabeth U. Yates and Julia E. Smith.

In the literary composition of several chapters, I have been assisted as follows: The chapter on "The Geology of Rhode Island" was written by Mr. H. S. Reynolds, of Providence, an expert geologist, and president of the Franklin Society. Hon. Jabez L. Mowry, State Forester, is the author of the chapter on "Rhode Island Forestry." Hon. Nathan W. Littlefield wrote the last half of the chapter on "The Judiciary." The "History of the Jews in Rhode Island" was contributed by Mrs. Caesar Misch. The "History of the Roman Catholic Church" was written by Rev. Thomas S. Cullan, of Providence. Rev. Gideon A. Burgess contributed the material on "Fruit and Granges." Dr. Arthur H. Harrington, Superintendent of State Hospital for Mental Diseases, has given an inside view of State Institutions at Howard. Mr. I. W. Patterson, Chief Engineer of Public Roads, contributes the article on "Roads and Road Building." The Bureau of Indian Nomenclature at Washington has aided in the spelling of Indian names.

The first three volumes constitute the history proper, for which the author and his associates are absolutely responsible. The fourth volume of biographies is an essential factor in the finished work. That volume reveals the personal histories of the men who have made and are now making Rhode Island history. It reveals the important fact that all history is the life of a congeries of men and women engaged in the various occupations and professions that make up the sum total of a Commonwealth. To each generation, in its order, comes the contribution of all the past, and from that is evolved, as the acorn from the oak, the new order and type of civilization, of which each new creation is the expression, true or modified of a fixed, but variously interpreted part. All basic principles of the old, such as soul liberty, civil liberty, democracy and their associates live, incarnate, in the new. "E'en in our ashes live our wonted fires."

Rhode Island was early the asylum, the "City of Refuge," of great souls, with noble ideals. Their generations still live. Our great task is to carry up to a higher reality the dreams they dreamed, the visions they saw, the great purposes for which they wrought. Rhode Island principles and American patriotism, rightly understood and boldly maintained under wholesome laws, will save our beloved State and our greater Commonwealth of Federal States.

THOMAS W. BICKNELL.

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## CHAPTER I

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THE NARRAGANSETT BASIN



## CHAPTER I. THE NARRAGANSETT BASIN.

The Narragansett Basin is one of the most interesting historic as well as geologic sections of New England. Its total area lies between the Atlantic Ocean on the south and Wachusett on the north, and includes on the east the lands drained by the Taunton River, and on the west the lands sloping toward the Pawtucket River. This basin, irregular in shape, extends from north to south a distance of one hundred miles, and from east to west it has an average width of about forty miles. The State of Rhode Island occupies the seaward end of this territory, and is in length about fifty miles, in breadth about twenty-five miles, a total of about 1,300 square miles. Longitude  $71^{\circ} 35'$  west cuts the State in halves. The latitude of Newport is  $41^{\circ} 30'$ , and that of Providence is  $41^{\circ} 49'$  north.

The principal streams that water and drain the Narragansett Basin, slopes and plains, are the Pawtucket or Blackstone, the Pawtuxet, the Taunton, the Moshassuck, the Woonasquatucket, Coles and Lees rivers, Palmers and Warren, Kickemuit, Runens and Barrington, Ten Mile River and Abbott's Run, all of which find their outlet in Narragansett Bay, where they mingle with the salt waters of the Atlantic. Wachusett, in Massachusetts, 2,108 feet above sea level, is the highest elevation, bounding the basin on the north, while Durfee Hill, in Gloucester, 805 feet high, Woonsocket Hill, in North Smithfield, 588 feet high, and Beacon Pole Hill, in Cumberland, 556 feet high, are the highest in Northern Rhode Island. As we descend from these rock-ribbed hills towards the south and east, we at once strike the glacial detritus, bounded by moraines or covered with the soil accumulation of the post-glacial period. On our down-hill journey we encounter water areas for ponds, held in their confines by rock precipices, over which the water plunges ten, twenty, fifty or more feet to the river grade below. The presence of these many ponds and waterfalls in Rhode Island points to a late or recent geologic transformation, previous to which the streams flowed over well-graded bottoms. The Moshassuck Valley is an illustration of an old river bed having a slight decline and a sluggish flow of water, while the Blackstone from Lonsdale to tidewater has ponded areas, rapids, and at Pawtucket a noted waterfall. These ponds and waterfalls, in all parts of the State, have added interesting details to the contour of the country, while their concentrated water-motive power has created a vast per capita wealth in manufacturing businesses.

The hill country of Rhode Island, our great forest land, constituting the northern and western areas, provides the reservoirs of our efficient

streams. The alluvial valleys and plains, lying between the hills, partially cleared of forest growth by the Indians, directed and determined the pioneer settlers to these lands as their homes and to agriculture as their chief industry.

The settlers at Providence, Portsmouth, Newport and Warwick were all farmers. Coddington, Clark, Brenton, Balston, Gorton, Greene, Holden, Harris, Carpenter and Williams, tilled the soil in early, rude ways for their livelihood, with the addition of fish-food from the shores and the sea. Roger Williams said of himself that he must be continually "at the hoe and oar for bread."

Other hills in the northwest section of the State are: Wyunkeag Hill, in Smithfield, 557 feet; Jerimoth Hill, in Foster, 799 feet; Beacon Pole Hill, in Cumberland, 556 feet; Chopmist Hill, in Scituate, 625 feet; Bald Hill, 630 feet; Raccoon Hill, 601 feet; Escoheag Hill, 541 feet; Break-Heart Hill, 468 feet—the last four in West Greenwich; Bowen Hill, in Coventry, 605 feet; Pine Hill, Exeter, 543 feet; Neutaconkanut Hill, Providence, 299 feet; Beacon Hill, Providence, 200 feet, and Mount Hope, Bristol, 199 feet. Within the State there are more than eighty hills between 200 and 800 feet high. Wallum Pond, in the hill country of Burrillville, is 575 feet above sea level, and Ponegansett Reservoir, in Gloucester, on the south slope of Durfee Hill, is 625 feet above the sea. The stream from the latter is tributary to the Pawtuxet River, which from its sources in Northwestern Rhode Island waters thousands of acres of upland, while its power turns thousands of mill wheels, and they, in turn, millions of wheels of looms and spindles in forty villages along that busy, industrious stream.

It is possible and quite probable that prior to the last glacial period the Pawtuxet River flowed in a southerly course, entering the northwest corner of Greenwich Bay at Apponaug. The water-shed of the State begins at Woonsocket Hill, on the north, 588 feet high, extending southerly to Wyunkeag Hill, 557 feet high, skirting the east bank of Moswansicut Pond, over Bald Hill, in Scituate, 501 feet high, to River Point. Here the Pawtuxet, gathering its forces west and northwest has found a passage between hills 200 and 300 feet high, making for itself a new course northeasterly to Providence River, at Pawtuxet.

The divide, south of River Point, follows a chain of hills on the dividing line of the towns of East and West Greenwich and Exeter and North Kingstown, thence south by Sherman Hill, 293 feet high, Kingston Hill, 252 feet, and Tefft's Hill, 255 feet, to Sugar Loaf Hill and the alluvial plains of South Kingstown on the shores of the Atlantic.

The Pawtucket or Blackstone River Basin is the most important of the Narragansett Basin tributaries. In it we find the river, flowing somewhat sluggishly through Worcester County, assuming immense power



PLATE I.

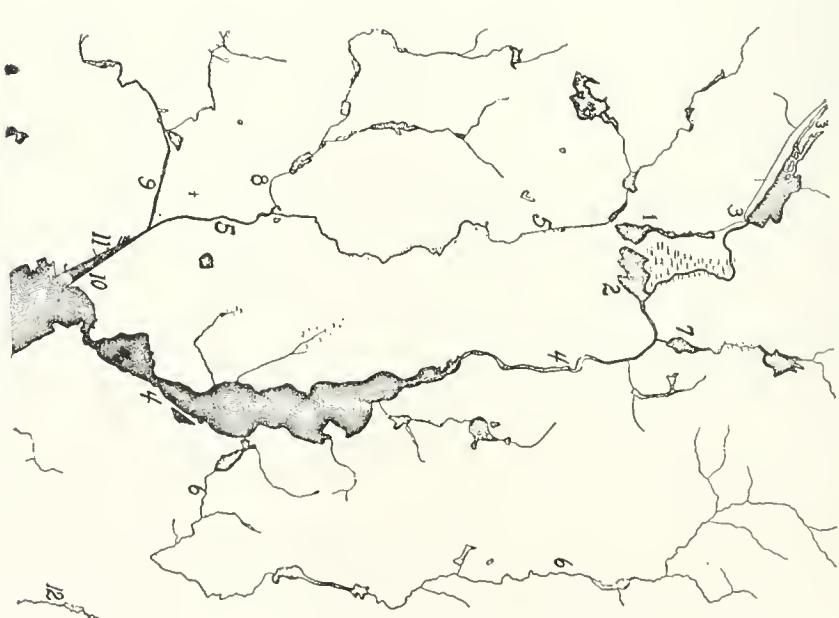


## RIVER BASINS AND DIVIDES—NARRAGANSETT BASIN.

All areas between the *heavy* lines drain into Narragansett Bay. The terminal moraine makes the divide which bounds the Pawcatuck basin on the south.

1. Pawcatuck. 2. Pawtuxet. 3. Woonasquatucket. 4. Moshassuck. 5. Blackstone. 6. Ten Mile. 7. Warren, Barrington and Runnins. 8. Blackstone and Seekonk.

PLATE II.



## SCOTT'S POND AND THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY.

1. Scott's Pond. 2. Valley Falls Pond. 3. Blackstone River and Canal. 4. Post-glacial Blackstone, or Seekonk River. 5. Moshassuck River, or Pre-glacial Blackstone. 6. Ten Mile River. 7. Abbott's Run. 8. West River. 9. Woonasquatucket River. 10. Fox Point. 11. Providence River. 12. Runnins River.

and creative force at Woonsocket Falls, Manville, Lonsdale, Valley Falls, Central Falls and Pawtucket Falls. There are twelve manufacturing centres on a river line of twelve miles, between and including Pawtucket and Blackstone. This immense concentration and utilization of power has few if any equals in the world, while the lands adjoining, watered by tributary brooks, are fertile and wealth-producing. The Blackstone Valley is famous as the starting point of the textile industries of the country, at Pawtucket Falls, where Samuel Slater and Moses Brown, in 1790, set in operation the first cotton spinning and weaving in America. From that enterprise, Rhode Island has grown into one vast machine shop, wherein every type of industrial manufacture has been successfully carried on.

Plate II is an interesting study of the old Pawtucket-Blackstone River. The Moshassuck River is represented by the numerals 5, 5, 10, 11. This is the old bed of the Blackstone before the last glacial period. Figure 1 is at Scott's Pond. Above it a moraine was formed, stopping the flow of the stream at that point and compelling it to find a new bed to the sea. This it did by turning easterly at 3, then southerly to 2, then easterly to 7, thence southerly to join the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket at Fox Point, Providence. The fall from the level of Scott's Pond to tidewater is seventy-four feet.

Ten Mile River is seen in Plate II marked by the figure 6. That stream probably, in preglacial days, flowed south into Runens and Barrington River. The change of course may have been in later time.

The Pawtuxet and the Pawcatuck valleys are striking examples of the creative value of water power, guided by human skill and aided by human industry.

While Rhode Island was an agricultural community, our farms were very slow producers of wealth. The great change in industries, wealth and in population came with the utilization of the water power of our numerous streams and waterfalls. The River Valley forces called for labor which in time became skilled labor, giving to employer and employed better and surer returns than the seeds and soils of the farm.

But the great feature of the Narragansett Basin was and is Narragansett Bay, the great sunken river of the ocean, whose mean tides at Providence are about five and a half feet. This sea inlet and freshwater outlet—the Bay—is twenty-five miles long and ten miles wide, at its greatest breadth, between Wickford and Tiverton. Its depth, near the Dumplings, at Newport, is 120 feet, equaling the deepest water of Delaware or Chesapeake Bays, and deeper than Buzzards Bay, Vineyard Sound and the harbors of New York, Boston, New London and Portland.

The Narragansett Basin, thus outlined, has a northern and western wall 805 feet high and a northeastern wall nearly 600 feet above the

sea. Its greatest depth, 120 feet, added to the greatest height, 805 feet, gives 925 feet as the certain altitude of the great glacier which fashioned this remarkable section of New England, while it is probable that its maximum height, at the period of its most efficient work, was many times that altitude.

The ice-river which fashioned the contours of Rhode Island, flowed slowly over the nearly level floor of Southern Massachusetts till it reached the stubborn cliffs and the sharp declivity at Woonsocket Falls. From there to Providence, a distance of thirteen miles, the fall of over sixty feet per mile gave this semi-fluid stream a considerable velocity and an irresistible force down the Pawtucket and old Moshassuck River beds, on its way to the sea. It was the share of this enormous ice plough that fashioned the bed of Providence River, cut the channels that formed our island areas and made its deepest downward drive near the Dumplings, between Aquidneck and Conanicut islands. While cutting and dredging channels, this great earth mechanic wrought in planing mountains to hills; in smoothing rough, rocky ridges; in grinding to finest clays, sands and gravels of the detached rocky cliffs, and in the distribution of this raw material from nature's grist-mill over the hard foundations of the valley basin it had excavated. The striated ledges and the giant boulders on our highest hills and ledges are picturesque and conclusive evidence of the glacial occupation of our territory and witness the values the ice-age conferred on our once ice-submerged State.

This Narragansett glacier, as we will style it, was confined to the old Pawtucket (now Blackstone) River bed by the high elevations of land in Woonsocket and Cumberland. To its operations we owe all of the present physical conditions of land and water west of the Island of Rhode Island. Sakonnet River and Mount Hope Bay were fashioned by another glacial stream, which wrought out the Titicut Valley and flowing southward into and through Mount Hope Bay, divided at the north end of Aquidneck, one stream joining the Rhode Island glacier at Bristol Ferry, and one flowing to the ocean through the Sakonnet channel.

It is probable that the land area of Rhode Island, as well as that of Southern Massachusetts and Connecticut, extended many miles south of the present ocean bounds. Geologists tell us that the land at Boston was at least forty miles from the sea at the close of the last glacial period. The same was undoubtedly true of Rhode Island, and, probably, of all Southern New England. Block Island, now twenty-four miles from Newport, was a part of the mainland. That island was a vast deposit of clay, which has bravely withstood the age warfare of the ocean, as has Gay Head, a corresponding clay cliff in the ocean waters of Southern Massachusetts. In proof that Block Island had its origin in the last glacial period, the author has a piece of solid oak wood, cut from an

oak log found one hundred feet in depth by the drill of an artesian well operator at the harbor on that island. At the present time the tide-water line of Rhode Island is 400 miles long.

Professor Arnold Guyot, after a careful study of the contour of the Narragansett Basin, wrote: "This territory is strongly marked. It is fitted to be the abode of active, hardy and vigorous men." He saw in our hills, valleys, streams and waterfalls the exhaustless forces that would create and sustain our varied manufactures; in our climate and soils the rewarding fruits of intelligent tillage; in our open-harbor tidal waters, uniting in one great artery to the ocean the streams of agricultural and manufacturing industries, the opportunities and wealth of commercial enterprises.

Narragansett Bay extends from Bullock's Point on the north to its double mouths at the south-east and south-west points of Conanicut Island. Four-fifths of the land area of the State lies on the west shore of the Bay. Having the Atlantic Ocean at our front door, with the warm waters of the Gulf Stream a hundred miles away, our climate is warmer than elsewhere in New England, while our flora includes the English ivy and the rhododendron, which withstand our severest cold. In many places the latter grows spontaneously to the height of twenty feet. Owing to a delightful climate and rich soil, the Island of Rhode Island has been styled "The Garden of America," and Captain Myles Standish declared that Sowams (Barrington) was "The Garden of the Plymouth Patent and the flower of the Garden." In 1665 Colonel Richard Nichols, English Governor of New York, in a report to King Charles, wrote: "The Nanhygansett Bay is the largest and safest port in New England, nearest the sea and fittest for trade. In this Province, also, is the best English grasse, and most sheep. The ground very fruitful, ewes bring ordinarily two lambs. Corn yields eighty for one, and in some places they have had corne twenty-sixe yeares together without manuring."

In 1690 some person, name now unknown, wrote as follows: "ROAD ISLAND is of considerable bigness, and justly called the *Garden of New England* for its Fertility and Pleasantness. It abounds with all things necessary for the life of Man, is excellent for Sheep, Kine and Horses; and being environed by the Sea, it is freed from the dangers of Bears, Wolves and Foxes, which much molest and damnifie those that live on the Continent." This reference is to Aquidneck, the largest of the ten principal islands in Narragansett Bay.

It is evident that this great inland water basin, receiving, for twenty-five miles in length, the income and outflow of the ocean tides, has proved of immense advantage to the territory and peoples in its proximity. The first and greatest value of a deep and wide waterway is its relation to trade and commerce.

The Narragansett Basin has a depth of thirty feet at Providence Harbor, thereby furnishing a terminal for national and foreign trade. Harbors of less depth of water are found at Pawtucket, East Providence, Pawtuxet, Barrington, Warren, Bristol, Warwick, East Greenwich, Wickford, Portsmouth and Newport, and the islands in the great basin. Portsmouth and Newport were the first Rhode Island towns to engage in shipbuilding earlier than 1646, and in domestic trade by water, while Providence discouraged commerce by forbidding the cutting of timber except for houses and fuel. Dutch vessels from Manhattan were the first carriers of goods to the trading houses on the Bay. Dutch Island, in the west passage, gets its name from a trading post established there by the Dutch West India Company in 1625. It is a matter of great regret in modern days that the early settlers of Rhode Island, and more especially those at Providence, did not see and utilize the Narragansett Basin in building up the northern part of the State. In fact, such danger seemed to attend Bay navigation that on the departure of the Deputies of Providence, in 1647, to meet in the General Assembly at Portsmouth, a parting word was spoken: "Desiring the Lord's Providence for your safe arrival there \* \* \* we commit you unto the protection and direction of the Almighty, wishing you a comfortable voyage, a happy success and a safe return unto us again." So great were the perils of a canoe voyage with paddles from Providence to Portsmouth, a distance of fifteen miles!

This basin was the home of the food-fish of the people, and continues its supplies for home and distant consumption. The fin and shell fisheries have supported multitudes of our own people, while the Boston, New York and more distant markets depend largely upon the fish-foods of our Narragansett Basin.

Dr. Francis Wayland, the great president of Brown University, while deeply appreciating the physical and economic values of the Narragansett Basin, saw intellectual values in our singularly interesting geologic structure. In a public address at Providence, he once said: "Without disparaging the classics, I commend to my fellow-citizens the study of their own geography and history. Though Rhode Island is the smallest State in the Union, she is larger than ancient Attica and may yet act a part alike illustrious and honorable. She is as favorably situated for great achievements as was the Athenian Republic. She has vast resources of power, as yet undeveloped, arising from her unique physical structure, and her fortunate location in Southern New England, midway between the great commercial centres of Boston and New York. Nature has done her part in the structure of a republic, in miniature, wherein agriculture, manufactures, commerce, education and religion may have opportunities for fullest development. Its smallness may be made the occasion of its true greatness. Her granites may serve as good a purpose as Pentelic

or Parian marble. Here is ample room for schools of learning, science and art, where educated skill shall make industry creative and its methods profoundly ethical. The aboriginal names of our bays, streams, ponds, hills, groves, are well worth preserving as linking us with a dim but real historic past, as do the mythologic names that cling to the nomenclature of Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome."

It is easily seen that Rhode Island owes its existence as a Commonwealth, the smallest in the group of States, to the Narragansett Basin around and to which its towns are clustered. Geography, soil, climate, wind and water power, and all the forms of nature have been tributary to the making of a civilization, peculiar, distinguished, incident to the physiological structure of our territory. It was not an accident of history that two of the most interesting Indian tribes in America made their homes in this basin. Neither was it an accident that free institutions should first find full expression here. Individualism also grew out of several relations. "Lands separated by a narrow frith abhor each other." Each separate community within its own bounds of water or hill slope had its own centralized idealism, its own reason for existence. The town was a tribal expression, and the men of the twentieth century still carry the tribal instincts, traditions and mould of tribal life of the seventeenth. Williams at Providence, Field at Mashapaug, Harris at Pawtuxet, Gorton at Warwick, Smith at Narragansett, Coddington and Clarke at Newport, were types and representatives of distinct historic character and development brought into full expression in a territory where each man, unchallenged or challenged, wrought out his problem in his own peculiar way. The Narragansett Basin was created for such an end and to the introduction and procedure of the human drama, the solution of the white man's problem of democracy, the future chapters of this history are devoted.





## CHAPTER II

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### RHODE ISLAND GEOLOGY AND SOIL



## CHAPTER II.

### RHODE ISLAND GEOLOGY AND SOIL.

(By HENRY S. REYNOLDS, Ph. D.)

Certainly no book of modern date, dealing with historical records of mankind, would be complete without the close relationship being noted between the people and the soil which they inhabit, and which for generations they have occupied.

The land has much to do in making its inhabitants; the one is fitted to the other as truly as two hemispheres making one complete sphere. It was recorded a long time ago of a certain land that "it eateth up its inhabitants," but the true interpretation comes out in the narrative that the land produced mighty men who were of giant mould. We first follow out the topographical features of a country and note whether it be a plain or a rugged outline, whether luxuriant with a growth of vegetation or inhospitable to forms of life, whether well supplied with moisture or of desert dreariness. Either of these suggested extremes stamps its human life indelibly.

All the great civilizations of history began in fertile river valleys. Egypt occupied the granary of the world; Babylon and Assyrian civilization sprang forth in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates—the Mesopotamian fertility that moved the world with envy. The Hindus on the banks of the Ganges and the Indus, the Chinese on the Yang-tse-kiang and Hoang-ho, are sufficient examples of the rivers' influence in governing the development of civilization. In later times, the Tiber and the Po nurtured the germs of great civilizations or of mind.

In the settlement of our own shores, the river outlets were largely the choice spots which invited the first settlers and from which points the newcomers turned their footsteps into the wilderness for homes and wealth and final national fame.

The navigable inland waters open up natural features of a country, its timber growths, its furs and flesh of animal life, its mineral resources, and, last, but not least, its soils for cultivation, and the production of crops at the hand of the skilled husbandman to supply food for coming millions of the race for advancing generations. The historian, viewing these facts, sees the true result in, not alone a robust, well fed industrial population of creatures, but also, the *social uplift*, the constant evolution of the race from the mere vital, to the more ethical plane of being. *The earth for man and man for his fellow-man*—this is the *high note* to be reached in human culture as revealed by artistic touch or historian's pen.

No text could better represent the spirit of our present chapter in Rhode Island history than the sentiment we have just voiced in the human problem.

There is also an industrial prelude that has a bearing on Geology as a factor in the development of a commonwealth like our state.

When men decide to engage in the production of a certain line of goods, they select a suitable place to erect their manufacturing plant, where an abundance of necessary material is at hand, also power to run the same, and where skilled workers may be secured for their enterprise. In other words, no one can produce a result without first investing in an adequate stock of necessary preparatory supplies.

When the architect of the Universe began His creative task of expressing His mind in terms of *matter*, crowning His dynamic action with man, a combination of soul and animal structure, He made adequate use of resources, and conservation of law, that would eventually restore to Himself all that was necessarily involved in the enterprise, plus what He purposed to produce—a perfect man under perfect surroundings, and endowed with creative faculties, similar to His Own Mind—filled, also, to the fullest degree with Divine attributes, goodness, love, joy, peace, etc.

With some such thoughts filling their minds, we can see the early pilgrims facing the perils of the deep, saddened by the separation from old country ties, yet bravely taking up life on this side of the ocean upon a bit of land which they truly saw was to be the theater upon which was to be played anew the drama—tragedy of man's exaltation, under more modern environments, and with new natural gifts; beauties of plants, animals, mineral wealth, and best of all, "freedom to worship God" without set forms, ceremonies, regal or ecclesiastical. The sun, moon and stars were as independent in aspect of one another as those modern argonauts who landed on our New England shore. Their feet pressed upon the rocks of the new country, typical of the New Earth, and its blessings of "soul-liberty."

In this brief review we then recognize in man, certain basic laws of life, more precious than home comforts, more satisfying than wealth, more eagerly sought after than regal pomp. All that we may present in these few pages of Rhode Island geology and her productive soil and industrial natural wealth, is to be transmuted into sturdy Christian effort, an optimism that will change the foreign fugitive from oppression and illiteracy into red-blooded freemen, true sons of Rhode Island.

The history of a country made up of the union of separate entities like our United States, bound together by a constitution and with confederation of interests which cannot be cut apart by state lines, such a land may be well represented by one of its parts being chosen, even a

very small part, like our own state, by which to demonstrate the geologic wealth and philosophy of each and all of the states.

The Norse men are said to have explored our New England coast and to have given the name of Vineland to it, on account of its luxuriant growth of vine, the grape, and one of our indentations is known as Vineyard Sound. Norumbega Tower, near Newtonville, Massachusetts, is one of the fabled camps of these hardy explorers. On the rocks at Mt. Hope and at Dighton, Massachusetts, near by, are certain weird characters displayed at low tide. We can only remark that if these marks were made by those early voyagers, the shore line has not changed materially since that early date.

We may readily distribute our topics in this chapter under the following general heads:

#### RHODE ISLAND STATE GEOLOGY.

- (I) A short history of geological explorations and published literature.
- (II) General geologic structure of Narragansett Bay, and state geologic problems.
- (III) Marine and atmospheric agencies, destructive and constructive.
- (IV) Distribution of rocks, Archean, Sedimentary, Later Volcanics.
- (V) Physical characters of soil: origin, culture, etc.

I. Dr. Charles T. Jackson, in January, 1839, was appointed by the state legislature to make a Geological and Agricultural Survey of the state, and the following year, 1840, was presented his report which included a geological map of the state and a section chart across the state from west to east. Previous to this report, certain short articles bearing on the mineral resources of the state had appeared in various publications devoted to scientific matters. Certain general maps and mineralogies had referred to some geological features extending from other states into Rhode Island. Forty-seven years elapsed before the next Rhode Island report was issued by Providence Franklin Society. Dr. David W. Hoyt, principal of the English High School, of Providence, in 1887, wrote his pamphlet of 130 pages on Geology of Rhode Island, which was published by the Franklin Society. His subjects were arranged under seven heads:

Index of publications bearing upon the geology and mineralogy of Rhode Island.

Catalogue of rocks and minerals collected by Dr. Jackson's Survey.

Catalogue of fossils found in Rhode Island.

Catalogue of minerals found in Rhode Island.

List of localities in Rhode Island of interest to geologists and mineralogists.

Results of diggings.

Three plates of fossils accompany the publication, but no maps. The town of Cumberland is called the "Mineral Pocket of New England."

In 1899 was published the United States Geological Monograph XXXIII, on the Geology of Narragansett Basin, the joint work of Professor N. S. Shaler and J. B. Woodworth and A. F. Foerste. This work was well illustrated with photographic plates and maps. It contains 402 pages and two geologic maps, one of the north and one of the south sections of the carboniferous system of the state.

- Part I. General geology, is by Prof. N. S. Shaler; four chapters.
- Part II. The northern and eastern portion of the basins, by J. B. Woodworth; six chapters.
- Part III. The carboniferous strata of southwest basin, A. F. Foerste; twelve chapters.

In 1889 the American Journal of Science (Third Series), volume XXXVII, page 411, reported an insect fossil found in the Pawtucket shales and described by Prof. A. S. Packard, of Brown University. In the Bulletin of United States Geological Survey, No. 101, of 1893, with 27 pages and two plates, Dr. S. H. Scudder described and figured a small insect fauna collected by many observers in the shales about the head of Narragansett Bay. A list of these is given, pages 202-203, of the before-given monograph of Prof. Shaler, etc., headed, "Insect Fauna of Rhode Island Coal Fields."

In 1905 was published "Taconic Physiography" Bulletin, 272, of United States Geologic Survey, the work of T. Nelson Page. It is here held that the only series of rocks of sedimentary origin lying upon the crystalline quartz and gneisses on the western border of the State of Rhode Island and below the Cambrian and Carboniferous beds, belongs to this series, "Taconic." This pamphlet of 52 pages is accompanied by a geologic map and numerous photographs of the Taconic region of western Massachusetts and of the Green Mountains, but no stated localities of this series is listed within Rhode Island. In 1907 was published, "The Green Schists and Associated Granites and Porphyries of Rhode Island," as the United States Geological Bulletin, No. 311, by Benj. K. Emerson and Joseph H. Perry. This report consists of 74 pages. It intimately relates certain rocks of Rhode Island with the above-mentioned Taconic series, so both pamphlets should be considered as of one mind. A map is given, showing the state boundary line between Rhode Island and Connecticut as being well paralleled by these Taconics lying along this

height of land bordering the two states; while with Massachusetts on the north of both we have a triangle of states of geologic harmony and of economic, mineralogical interest. This region of crystallines, and devoid of fossils has proved a hard nut to crack. The American Geological Society Bulletin, volume XXV (1914), pages 455-476, published "Geology of the Diamond Hill Cumberland District in Rhode Island and Massachusetts," by C. H. Warner and S. Power. In this is described and mapped in detail the rocks of the Blackstone Valley in Rhode Island and the region just north. The writers regard the metamorphic strata as pre-Cambrian, therefore Archean. The lower beds are described as the Cumberland quartzite, the equivalent of the Westboro quartzite, and the upper green schists including the Smithfield limestone as the Ashton schists, the equivalent of the Marlboro formation.

"Geology of Massachusetts and Rhode Island," United States Geological Survey Bulletin, No. 597, by B. K. Emerson, which contains 289 pages; the map accompanying this report includes the two states, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Here we can plainly see how our little state shares her geologic plums with the state that embraces her on the north and east borders as she does with Connecticut on the west.

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**II. SURFACE STRUCTURE OF NARRAGANSETT BASIN AND GENERAL GEOLOGIC PROBLEMS.**—It is now well understood by geologists that North America has been more or less flooded by the ocean at least fifteen times since the opening of the Proterozoic Era, and the continents have been similarly submerged below the sea level. We may assume that the faunas and floras have changed as many times to fit these influxes of the ocean, bearing life-forms, especially the plankton microscopic life of the sea. Layers of fossils in the sedimentary rocks where they occur, amply testify by their changed forms, changes of environments—they become veritable "time-markers." The area of North America embraces 7,600,000 square miles today, and in past times extended farther eastward over sea-shelves, making approximately 8,300,000 square miles. Our state is but a minute fraction of the continent—1306 square miles, and of this, one-tenth is covered by Narragansett Bay. These fifteen geologic floods began and ended with continental shelf-movement, which included from one to five per cent, of the area of this continent, and in the case of our state this oceanic overlap has preserved few fossils, in the marine strata. The carboniferous formation of stratified rocks being mainly fresh or brackish water deposits are more fortunate in its fossil preserves, certain interesting insect remains and plant impressions, found in rocks within our borders have given us some attention in geologic circles.

It is well for us to bear in mind that our state, as a part of the continental area stood up out of the ocean for much longer periods of

time than when the deposits were being laid down on the ocean bottom—in short, the "intervals" between the periods of ocean floods in our own state were clearly marked by the fresh water coal series of beds. The prefix *epi* or *ep* added to the era time-name is the name of the succeeding uplift—space of time when the land stood above the ocean; thus, epi-Archean, ep-Silurian, ep-Algonian, signify the uplift of land following these sedimentary deposit periods, Archean, Silurian, etc.; the marine periods being named directly for their marine fossils. The nomenclature of geology a century ago was not the same as at present carried out. Then the names of "Old Red Sandstone," "New Red Sandstone," the "Culm" were known. "Anthracite" came from, crushed in the mountain making. Oolite, for the present Jurassic, and chalk, have now the name Cretaceous. The period names were usually taken from the geographic area where the system of rocks were first considered to be of period value; so the names came Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian and Devonian, being the common people-names living in England and Wales. Mississippian, from the valley where the rocks of the carboniferous in this country were first found in full force, and Blackstone of the Narragansett Bay series. The Triassic was an heirloom from Germany. The Ordovician period in North America was closed by the Taconic disturbance in western Massachusetts and eastern New York when low mountains appeared along our present New England country from Newfoundland to Virginia.

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III. MARINE AND ATMOSPHERIC AGENCIES.—At least five cold periods in the history of the earth have been identified which took place in the Epi intervals when the continents stood above the ocean. It is conceivable that climates have repeatedly fluctuated between warm and moist, and cool and arid. The plants and animals of the rocks give evidence upon which to base this belief while marine life was more protected from these temperature vicissitudes. "Plankton" was a term that Haeckel proposed for forms of floating life of the seas, pelagic life in general, largely algae, foraminiferae and radiolaria, together with larvae of higher animals constituting food for fishes and the like. The abundance and richness in species of these microscopic forms rival those of forest life, and show the importance of minute protected life. These have been figuratively spoken of as the "Pastures of the seas" for the animal life of the ocean bottoms. These are collectively known as "benthos." These low forms of life take in carbonic acid and free oxygen supplying favorable conditions for higher animals, especially in temperate waters. Nearly all abyssal invertebrates are phosphorescent, able to transform the darkest depths into a magic garden. Deposits of the sea bottoms form largely the limestones and dolomites such as we find at the

lime quarries of Lincoln in our state, and other scattered deposits about our crystalline western Rhode Island. The fossil origin is not shown, because of metamorphism through proximity to igneous injections. A process of alteration has also in some cases taken place contemporaneously with accumulation which has concealed the fossil origin which takes place on the ocean bottom through chemical changes in warm waters.

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IV. RHODE ISLAND SERIES OF GEOLOGIC STRATA AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION.—We recognize now six eras in the geologic series where three formerly sufficed. Dr. Jackson in 1840 noted three eras, namely: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary. Later, a fourth was added, the Quaternary. Our present six are: Archeozoic, Proterozoic, Paleozoic, Mesozoic, Cenozoic, Psychozoic. Not the whole series of these are discoverable within our state limits, but a few of the representative formations of these are present for our study. For comparison with our rocks we will give a clearly marked, well identified locality outside of our own borders in each case before we present our own for observation. First: The so-called "Shield" of Canada, the oldest exposed rock; the Laurentian Mountains within its confines is not well understood in its details. It represents a long, long elapse of time and contains in some of its area the dawn of life. Much of its rugged strata give no signs that the geologist can translate into terms of life. Theoretically, there must be rocks that have never known life. *Azoic* was the expressive term used for such, but they have been pushed down, out of sight until we can doubt if any eye has ever seen the truly primitive azoic nucleus of our earth. Archean was the next term applied to this unknown, misunderstood old formation, having in its breast, sedimentary strata as well as purely crystalline rocks. Now, the term Archeozoic conveys the idea of dawn of life, and we have such rocks in our own state on our western border uplift. As we tramp up hill and down through the western highland border of our state, we divide our upturned ridges and dales into three classes of rocks: Those having more or less igneous appearance, masses of schists and gneisses, and here and there, more clearly marked stratified sedimentary members.

Injected granites form the heart's core in many cases, of porphyries, gneiss, green rocks, while trap-like outcrops help out the rocky bastion-like collection of western Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. These states, with others, present an illustrative area of strata from Newfoundland to Alabama, of a folded mountain section, very ancient and greatly denuded by long weathering. This mass was thrust up, compressed against the Adirondacks. The thrust seems to have operated from the east direction. Erosion, long extended, has caused this vast wrinkled pile of strata everywhere to wear down from sharp outlines

to a low plateau showing its mountainous structure, minus its mountain masses: Steep, dipping, and truncated outlines, where huge arches of strata had formerly reared their folds between the deep concave down-thrusts. The characteristic mountain in southern New Hampshire has loaned its name to this kind of mountain structure—"Monadnock," while Wachusett, Grace, Brush and Asnehumskit, are neighboring native signal towers.

Our Rhode Island and Connecticut area extends in its Monadnock structure northward to Essex County, Massachusetts. These weathered bed-rocks of our western highlands, form the western rim of the more level section of carboniferous strata which make up the substratum of our soils over most of our state, and where our rivers flow cutting their beds out on their journey to Narragansett Bay, to the sea.

Let us now take up in short detail, the separate sections of our state and show its bed rock foundations. We have dwelt upon the western rim-rock so largely made up of crystallines. Intervening in a narrow, devious north and south line between the granites and gneisses on the west and the carboniferous of the center and the east, is discovered, here and there, in isolated localities, rocks which have been called Cambrian, the period name of sedimentary, fossil bearing marine strata which in Connecticut, Massachusetts and elsewhere are superimposed on the before-mentioned crystalline rocks. The Cambrian beds are the lowest, first well recognized fossil bearing rock of our New England geologic section; the North Attleboro red limestone bearing well recognized fossils at the base of the carboniferous series in the neighborhood of Hoppin Hill, near North Attleboro. All the sections of our Archeozoic crystalline rocks show a uniform, steep dip to the east. The green schists copper bearing, which border our granite area on the east in certain locations, seem to occur in two flanking bands with the Albion Quartzite; an apparently overturned anticlinal occurs through Cranston in a broken line northward through the northern section of the state into Massachusetts. The green schists are, likely, the younger of the two. At the north of Albion, the newer portion of the green schists is seen, since the pebbles in the green schist are of quartzite like that of the central quartzite. At Maniton, near Providence, the quartzite anticline, flanked by green schists probably is included in the Milford granite, a so-called passage bed between the Grafton quartzite and the Marlboro formation.

Let us note that the Grafton Quartzite above is the later nomenclature for Cumberland quartzite and that Westboro quartzite is a still later proposed name by D. K. Emerson, 1917, for this lower member of the Blackstone series, of Rhode Island, and that the higher member is the Marlboro formation of schists, notably, the Smithfield limestone. The other rocks of the series being biotite schist, hornblende schist, epidote-

chlorite schist, actinolite quartzite, and steatite, with included beds of quartzite (D. K. Emerson) and limestones, for the chief part, of sedimentary origin.

The Smithfield limestone contains minerals of value while the lime is of economic importance. The schists above enumerated were, by former writers, called Ashton schists. Lincoln, Rhode Island, one mile west of Lonsdale, Rhode Island, has the main body of these interesting limestone outcroppings. Cumberland, Cranston and Newport are other points where outcroppings occur. The "hornblende rock" of Dr. Jackson's report, 1840, is now recognized as partly of igneous origin and part to this Marlboro formation both sedimentary and metamorphic. Coppermine Hill, Cumberland, Rhode Island, near Sneath Pond is referred to this Marlboro Formation. A word may be added as to this lime industry of the "Harris" and "Dexter" quarries. The magnesian lime of Rhode Island has always ranked high in the estimation of masons, but is unfit for agriculture, and care should be taken to use only soft rock for that purpose, free from magnesia (Dr. Jackson). The beds at these above-mentioned quarries vary from massive sacharoidal marbles, fine grained, to products laminated, shearing structures; bearing chlorite, asbestos, mountain leather and tale upon the gliding planes, the limestones under pressure flowed into all the interstices and now shows no trace of the separation (Woodworth). The formation as a whole, comprises biotite schist, hornblende schist, spodite, chlorite schist, actinolite, quartzite and steatite, all for the most part of sedimentary origin.

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Leaving this interesting Cambrian remnant lying in friendly arms of its protecting elder brother Archeozoic, we find no well attested beds of the Ordovician, Silurian, or Devonian periods of geologic deposition within our state, but we come immediately on leaving the Cambrian upon the Narragansett Carboniferous Basin extending eastward into Massachusetts. This Paleozoic outcropping is termed the Narragansett Series, and is of late Carboniferous or Permian time. Thus we see that the various earlier members of Carboniferous Mississippian period and earlier Pennsylvanian are missing from our geologic section.

Because the Carboniferous series are so largely of continental or fresh water deposits, the coal areas are of circumscribed, basin-like character, for we recognize four well marked coal areas or basins within our New England territory.

*First*, or nearest to the Adirondack backbone we have the Worcester Basin, extending brokenly from Connecticut to New Hampshire. *Second*, the Narragansett Basin. *Third*, the Boston, and nearly related Merrimack Bed, extending into New Hampshire and Maine. *Fourth*, one, and

perhaps more basins along the coast of Maine; lastly the well marked coal area of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Thus we recognize that the coal formations are separated areas and not an extended, continuous formation like the marine sedimentations. The Narragansett Basin covers eastern Rhode Island with carboniferous sediments, with here and there a bed of graphitic coal. Fossil plants usually are found in conjunction with the coal seams. We speak of coal *seams*, for the beds are now found in an upturned position. With the folded beds in this formation we also find intruded granites and felsites.

RHODE ISLAND OF THE PENNSYLVANIAN TIME.—The smallest coal basin is in the smallest state; 500 square miles comprises our basin area—a portion of this lies across the line in Massachusetts. The strata strike is north and south, a thickness of about 12,000 feet. These beds, in places, lie on rocks of Cambrian age where these have not been eroded during the long time of continental emergence extending from the Cambrian to Carboniferous.

If we begin our study of North American carbon on the east coast of our country we would number the *first* coal field as Acadian to which our own coal belongs. *Second* is the Appalachian; *Third*, Michigan; *Fourth*, eastern Indiana; *Fifth*, western Indiana and Illinois; *Sixth*, Ozark and Oklahoma. The Texas and western coals are of another class and do not need to be itemized here.

Where anthracite coal occurs, invariably is found the strata of rocks more or less folded and broken, so the term anthracite brings to our minds a crushed or broken environment. When the strata are much deformed the coals pass through a more complete metamorphosis and become graphitic, as our coal in Rhode Island. A continuous shale bed, covering the coal, shuts in the accumulating gas and petroleum, seals it so it has the true form to become and remain in the bituminous or soft coal condition. The Narragansett coal basin has been the field of much careful study by N. S. Shaler, J. B. Woodworth and A. F. Foerste in their monograph previously referred to in this chapter. Later along we have B. K. Emerson, who has made additions to our knowledge of the state formations.

Our carboniferous area is readily separable into a northern and southern sectional study. The north field groups are: Westville shales and Seekonk sandstone, Ten-mile River beds; Mansfield beds, Cranston beds and Sockanossett sandstones, Pawtucket shales; basal-beds of arkose. Southern field groups are: Purgatory Conglomerate, Kingston Series of Dr. Foerste, Eridane shales by Dr. Foerste; basal beds of arkose. The floral fossils consist of Pennsylvania age forms; the faunal fossils consist of ostracodes and insects. The coal beds are much broken or crushed and with much material of a foreign nature infiltrated from time to time

as the marsh lands were overflowed or the water drained off as the surface became raised. As a fuel, the coal is of little use since it must be pulverized and mixed with inflammable pitch or tar into briquettes.

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So far as sedimentary rocky strata are concerned for Rhode Island we are at the end of our list but we must believe that out of sight we may have other fragmental strata rocks. The Triassic System comes into New England in our western neighbor, Connecticut, at New Haven and northward casts a band following the Connecticut Valley through Massachusetts, in places, twenty miles wide. The trap-out-floe which is such a marker for this period at New Haven, is recognized in "East" and "West" rock and a picturesqueness is given to the scenery along the Connecticut river valley as we go north to the state of Vermont. Such land-marks only have to be mentioned as Mt. Tom, Mt. Holyoke, Mt. Toby, Titan's Pier, etc. The Triassic sandstone often called Connecticut sandstone was, by the former nomenclature called the New Red Sandstone, lying above the Carboniferous rocks, as the Old Red Sandstone laid below the coal beds of England. These Triassic rocks of Connecticut and Massachusetts have been the happy hunting grounds for *track* pilgrims these many years, for here in the "brownstone" quarries were discovered "bird-tracks" as they were called at first, and later made out to be by reptiles of lizard-like bodies but bipedal in their walk. The organic and climatic conditions indicate a semi-arid dryness for the extensive sand plains along the valley estuary in the Triassic days of animal travel and sand-walking. From Nova Scotia to the Carolinas the Trias appears in coastal spots, and we can readily imagine some part of our coast as being in trim for this period of coastal exploitation, but it may be under the stretch of a later deluge and later sediments.

Block Island is composed of transported granitic material similar to the glacial moraines of the Kingston mainland. No bed rock is in discoverable position on the island, and this drift soil lies on the Tertiary clays shown in the cliffs seventy to one hundred feet high on the southwest end of the island. This blue clay is destitute of marine shells, and is interstratified with beds of bog iron ore, mixed with pebbles to a thickness of three to seven feet. The strata slope northwest at twenty degrees pitch. Huge fragments of granitic rocks, both waterworn and angular are scattered on the shore line of cliffs. Paving stones by the cargo have in the past been taken from the island for city streets (Dr. Jackson). The Quaternary or Glacial Age of the geologic column gives us much of our soils of Rhode Island and these form the final feature of this chapter. The soil is the part of the State which man occupies and depends upon for his home crop. Every man owns his farm and garden just as far down as he cultivates it.

We began this chapter on Rhode Island Geology by showing the necessity of a locality assignment for man where he would be the prime factor, the head over all creation and ruler of all creatures below him. In our study, we have seen how our state as a part of this continent has risen from the ocean bottom, just a small sample of this continent, and this a sample of the whole earth.

Among all the specimens of creatures preserved as fossils, grading from the lowest forms of life up to man, no one is equal to man. Our proposition was that man should live for his brother man since no other creature had the social status that man exercises with his brother man. We have looked the geological strata through and have found this to be true. Tracing backward from our own day we see the sun in the midst of his planetary system holding this earth steadily in its orbit from age to age. The earth was made for man and his problem must be worked out here in safety. To keep our solar system in security the whole starry host must keep the creation time table and not miss a cog. This is the telescopic view of our subject of universal preparedness.

We next turn to the earth below our feet and analyze the parts of the life stream leading up to man. Man must be the expression of form, of types physical, the prophecy of the coming man. Let each one begin with self.

I have an entity, I am, esse, being, and, judging similar forms around me as also having identity, I have established communal faith which is based on sight. The beings next below man must have less mind than man, but the platform of live forms must be relatively larger than the spot man occupies. We find that the most of man's type features are four-limbed, vertebrate mammals.

Man has a brain reservoir on the top of a column of nerves well secured from injury, the vertebral column; he has four articulated limbs, and his young are nourished by milk, and are born without hair, to any extent. Other animals have these features in a less degree, especially, the size of the brain, which is just as we would expect man's platform would be, at the top. This platform of beasts must have a prophetic or evolutionary platform to spring from in their order, and we find such a one in the vegetable-cell kingdom, for plants are the basal food for the animal kingdom to rest upon. Each type of plant life from the immense forest giant to the microscopic plants of sea water are composed, like the animal life, from cell growth, but these are vegetable cells which must precede the higher ones. The food to be eaten must precede the eater, an evolutionary process which cannot be refuted. Yet plants must have a broader platform to rest upon which shall be, as a whole, lower in the scale than the cell structure, and so we find the mass of inorganic nature

ready to provide a foothold for every expression of plant life, and to supply the chemical food for its nourishment, growth, development into higher forms, type by type, and yet it is plain to be seen that inorganic matter as a whole is more primitive than organized life tissue. Still, it is a plain case that chemical supplies must come from a still more extended foundation supply than that which the chemical elements afford; that they must issue from a vast, hidden supply house, an adequate platform to rest upon. Now physicists are ready to inform us that back of all forms of matter, the invisible molecule exists that no so-called chemical element can preserve its identity without having its own kind, or some other married to it, so we speak of chemical attraction existing in every molecule of matter, whether it be a molecule of gold, iron, carbon, water, or marsh gas. Again, we must grasp the fact that the molecule must rest upon a yet broader supply for its elements to spring from, and again the physicist tells us that the unseeable molecule is made up of atoms, that atoms form molecules, and molecules form chemical elements and that these form the inorganic material of creation. Recent discoveries in radio-activity have enabled the modern expert in laboratory analysis to again subdivide our fondly nursed atom ultimate into *electrons*, and these again into *ions*, and that these least of all infinitesimals, the ions, are chasing one another around a common center as the planets in a solar system swing around their central body which holds them in their respective orbits only, that in the case of the ion center there is no body to circle around, and that the various ions themselves are only the kind of vortex activity that gives birth to the particular electron that each seeking others of its kind produces the particular atoms to form a particular molecule of a chemical element, this, in its turn, giving the inorganic supply to feed the plant, to feed animals, to serve under the headship of man. This is not "The House that Jack Built" of the nursery tale, but the universe that God built, into the plan of which He placed so much of Himself as was necessary—His power, His initial force.

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V. SOILS, ORIGIN, PHYSICAL CHARACTERS, CLASSIFICATION, SERVICEABILITY, ETC. *Origin of Soils.*—The primary source of soils can be readily apprehended from their fragmental character. Any hand lens will show that they are made up of minute pieces of rock, of quartz, mica, feldspar, hornblende, limestone, iron, and clay, with black, organic remains of plants. We may say, then that soils are derived from the rocks of a neighborhood or have been brought from a distance and deposited where they now occur. Here in Rhode Island we have both results in clear distinction one from the other, and also in varying mixtures of the two.

In our western highlands, among the archeozoic rocks of our west-

ern tier of townships we have the local soils deposited near the rocky ridges that in disintegration have yielded up their particles of sand, clay, iron, and other less marked materials, and these thoroughly mixed with organic flotsam are now found in the interstices of rocks, in glens, hollows, in fen and valley, and spread out as bottom land. We have the rich orchard soil, the truck patch, the grass and grazing land for herds of cattle to feed upon. In the more level sections of the state the great, wavy hills, and level reaches of old valley drainage, have been served with the soils ground down from Massachusetts highlands to the north and east, which have been brought by ice action from a distance of dozens of miles or even hundreds of miles away, and dumped as the ice melted and was spread out by water action in terraces or peneplanes where they now serve the agriculturist as soils, or if not fully mulled down, are left in drumlins, of sand and pebbles, they yet serve for a scanty growth of grass and bushes, a thin, unproductive soil.

Let us dwell for a moment on the distinguishing feature of our upland, granitic, and gneiss home-made soils; these are rich in iron, and in potash which give these soils a peculiar adaptability for the apple orchards for which Rhode Island is noted. The Narragansett Basin section of our state having so much of transported soils lying on the shales and sandstones of the Carboniferous series of rocks is less rich in the alkalies, but the soils serve well for general agricultural purposes when liberally supplied with the requisite fertilizers.

A more or less detailed familiarity with the facts which govern the growth of plants and the way that plants feed will assist greatly in securing an abundant return to the Rhode Island husbandman in his efforts to make the soil of his state in the greatest degree productive. We have seen that nature's laboratory reveals to us in physical and historical geology the methods and material by which it carries on a great milling industry for the production of soils, and not satisfied with this work alone it likewise supplies adequate facilities for the transportation of soils over all our northern states to a line east and west, south of the Ohio River, and if nature is so bountiful in soil production it is the work of man to study to make it as productive as possible. The United States Government through its State Experimental Stations assists in this matter as far as is possible and we suggest a few of the methods presented to the public to help us in our own state soil problems.

In soil analysis the first thing is to classify them mechanically; we have gravelly, sandy, loamy, clayey, and calcareous soils, disposed in the following classes by the relationship of the contained sand and clay:

Sandy soil contains 80 per cent or over of sand.

Sandy loam contains 60 to 75 per cent of sand.

Loams contains 40 to 60 per cent of sand.

Clay loam contains 25 to 40 per cent of sand.

Clay soil contains 60 per cent or over of clay.

Some states have made a careful study of the relative amount of sand and clay contained in the soil as resulting from the disintegration of rocks, so that rocks as granites, limestones, sandstones, shales, etc., in any locality become the basis for classification of soils of a given kind for a given crop would be right at hand. Maryland may be given as a sample state which presents some ten types of soils: *Pine barrens, market truck, tobacco, wheat, river terrace, grass, mountain pasture, etc., etc.* The number of soil particles per gram, has a steady increase in size of soil grains from "pine barrens" to "grass lands."

From the mechanical analysis of the samples which were used to make up these type-samples and perhaps of a large number of other soils of known agricultural value it would be possible to determine the smallest and the largest number of grains per gram of soil where these different crops could be successfully grown. For example, no crop can be successfully grown except under highly artificial conditions of manuring with organic matter or by irrigation, on a soil having so few as 1,700,000,-000 grains per gram. Good market truck is grown on a soil having 6,800,-000,000 grains. \* \* \* Good wheat is grown on a soil having 10,000,000,-000 grains per gram, and this must be near the limit of profitable wheat production, for 8,000,000,000 grains per gram gives a soil rather too light for wheat, but well suited to tobacco. A soil having 10,000,000,000 grains per gram is too light for grass, which thrives on a limestone soil having 24,000,000,000. Our type soils should therefore show the range for the profitable production of a given crop. We should be able also from the mechanical analysis of an unknown soil to give it its true agricultural place by reference to these established soil types.

Perhaps New Jersey gives the greatest number of soils for a state of its size.

*Granite soils, limestone soils, slate soils, red sandstone and shale soils, trap-rock soils, clay-district soils, drift soils, marl-region soils, tertiary soils, alluvial soils.* Physical features of soils we have seen are largely due to the proportions which they contain of stones, gravel, sand, clay, lime, and organic matter. The relation of the more important of these ingredients to the physical properties of soils may be noticed as we pass along. Stones do not count at all since their office in soil is negligible. Sand is heavy, is usually light colored; the grains do not cohere. It has little power of attracting moisture from the air, and allows water to pass through it readily. It absorbs and retains heat well. A soil with much sand in it will be dry and warm; easy to work; not sticky; will not "bake." In dry weather crops on such soils will suffer from lack of moisture. Soluble plant food will leach through such a soil.

Clay, or a soil with much clay, has a fine texture, and particles adhere tenaciously. It absorbs moisture from the air readily, draws water from below by what is known as capillary power, and holds it well. This tends to make such a soil cool, but it will absorb heat readily. It absorbs and holds ammonia and other gases readily. If stirred while wet it becomes hard; often cracks in drying. It differs much in color. The presence of iron gives a red color. Commonly it is a light yellowish color. Clay soils usually have more plant food than sandy ones; they hold moisture better, and are less liable to suffer loss of soluble manures or available plant food by leaching. They are hard to work, and often too cold and wet unless well drained. They "heave" as a result of freezing and thawing. A mixture of sand and clay makes a better soil than one almost entirely composed of either. Clay added to sand makes it more tenacious; enables it the better to absorb and hold moisture and gases; gives it power to stand drought better. The addition of sand to clay makes it more easily penetrable to the roots of plants; easier to work, somewhat warmer, less injured by being worked when wet; less apt to "heave." Humus, decayed vegetable matter, in soils makes them light in weight and dark in color; greatly increases their power to absorb moisture from the air and by their capillary power; makes clay soil less and sandy soil more compact. It is valuable as a source of plant food. Most soils containing much humus are fertile, if not too wet. Lime hastens decay of vegetable matter and is used on wet land to overcome in a measure the free acid of the same.

Following the mechanical examination of soils comes the chemical analysis which reveals to us whether the soil has the true plant food in its elemental make up. It has been seriously questioned whether chemical analysis of the soil gives the vital indication of the soil's productiveness, for it is a fact that all of the requisite elements may be present and yet not in the available state to be taken up by the growing plant and changed into the requisite plant tissue.

A carefully prepared analysis of the soil should give not only the actual food elements present, it must supply the fact of how much of it is available in water solution, in the acids of the soil, and in conjunction with the air.

Prof. F. H. King, in his book "Soils," on pages 84-87, states the chemical composition of ten examples each of two soils, sandy loam and clay soils taken from as many variable localities through the country; the result shows from this table that a chemical report on soils must be accompanied with a mechanical knowledge of the physical condition of the soil before a satisfactory result can be attained. We have dwelt at some length on these essential conditions of the Rhode Island soils, their origin, and structure, now we briefly turn to the more technical chemical ele-

ments, for their general consideration in tillage, and open with the statement that when we speak of "heavy" and "light" soils, the real truth we wish to convey is that the *adhesiveness* and not the *weight* of the soil is referred to, and that frequent examination as to the existing influences of moisture, heat, friability, etc., can keep us accurately informed as to the chemical and physical correlation of soil and plant growth.

The principal non-metallic elements present in the soil are oxygen, silicon, carbon, sulphur, hydrogen, chlorine, phosphorus, nitrogen, fluorine, boron. The prime metals are calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium, iron, manganese, aluminum. In actual soil analysis only the fine earth (never larger than 1 millimeter in diameter) is examined, it being assumed that this fine earth contains all the plant food ready for use of the plants. The fine earth is submitted to digestion with acids, which separate it into two parts—an insoluble residue which affords an approximate measure of the sandiness of the soil, and a soluble portion which is further examined for percentages of the alkalies, alkaline earths, and metaloids.

*Oxygen* is a gas and enters into combination with all the elements except fluorine. It occurs in the soil in the free state as well as in union with the other elements. The air is the great storehouse of oxygen, one-fifth of its bulk being this gas. Oxygen then never has to be fed to the soil for growing plants.

*Silicon* exists in combination with oxygen and forms quartz, the *sand* of our soils. It has been estimated that one-half of the earth's crust is quartz, owing to its hardness and insolubility it is accumulated in the soil as its chief bulk. *Carbon* occurs in the soil largely in the organic remains of plants and animals. United chemically with other elements it forms carbonates, and with oxygen it forms carbon dioxide which in the soil is taken up by the water and causes it to have a greater soluble power than when the water is free from it. The carbon which the plant uses for its tissue is derived from the gaseous carbon dioxide of the air. *Sulphur* in the soil is in a combined condition, united with iron, as a sulphide. The sulphates of potash, soda, magnesia and lime. *Gypsum*, or "land plaster" is a union of sulphur with oxygen and calcium, and is often applied to the soil as a dressing to increase its crop producing power.

*Hydrogen* combined with oxygen is water, so necessary for all agricultural industries. Water is decomposed by the plant action and its elements hydrogen and oxygen are at the service of the plants for building up starches, sugars, and other forms of organic structures.

*Chlorine* is not abundant in nature, and is not found in the soil in its free gaseous state. In some form of combination chlorine is widely diffused, is never absent in the ash of plants. Sodium chloride is our common salt. Its office in plant growth is not well understood.

*Phosphorus*, never free in nature, is found in the soil in limited quantities as it formed a part of the rocks even of the oldest geologic formations. The compounds of phosphorus are taken up from the soil and concentrated in the tissues of plants and thence transferred to animals who feed upon the plants.

The valuable commercial fertilizers are rich in phosphorus and are secured in large bulk in certain localities, and prepared, and marketed as fertilizers.

*Nitrogen* forms the chief bulk of the air, is not found in any quantity in rocks or in the soils except in humus, and in decayed tissue of animals and plants. By the action of microscopic life on plant roots in the soil nitric acid is made available to plant life directly from the atmosphere in the soil.

*Boron* and *fluorine* are not found in any considerable quantity, and in the ash of plants are not in appreciable quantity. Borax is the best known compound of boron. Fluorine when united with lime is a necessary ingredient of blood, milk, teeth, and bones of animals, and these are nourished by the plants upon which animals feed.

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The seven metals which are found in abundance in the soil, and which are built into plant-tissues are found in the ash of plants after they have suffered ignition. Aluminum is placed third in abundance in the rocks forming the earth's surface. It is found in the ash of Lycopodium, ground pine, but occurs in very minute quantities in the agricultural plants. It can hardly be called a true plant food. It is the basis of clay and it comes from pulverized feldspar rocks. Calcium and magnesium in their oxidized forms make up the limestone rocks.

Both are serviceable plant foods and are found in concentrated quantity in the fruition products the seeds, and their presence in the soil is essential.

Potassium and sodium are the alkaline metals; the former is very essential to soil fertility and care must be exercised that the salts of potash are not dissolved out by water and drained away when in fertilization it has in some way been added to the growing crop; the rows of plants should not follow a steep land-slope if such is present in the contour of the planted field.

Iron and manganese are minerals usually abundant enough in the soils and quite evenly distributed; the red and yellow tinted clays attest the oxide forms, and manufactured fertilizers need not contain oxides or salts of these tonic elements. We close this section of soil notes as to soil elements, with regret that much of great interest to our Rhode Island agricultural resources must go unstated.

A few words can be added as to the soils dependence upon moisture. Soil water is constantly in motion. When rain falls on the surface soil, the water begins to move in two ways, it soaks under ground, and it follows the slope of the surface of the land. When the rain ceases the sun comes out and evaporation begins from the surface of the soil and other particles rise from below, so a movement goes on night and day with varying changes of intensity. The plant as a crop is largely dependent upon the sufficient quantity of moisture for its complete development.

Most soils need drainage of some kind to prevent disastrous effects which come from too much soil-water, and some arid localities and dry seasons attest the need of seasonable irrigation methods. The market-gardener knows how responsive plant growth is to a sufficiency of moisture. Much attention is now paid to underground drainage and underground water-flow. Some of the states have been supplied, by U. S. Geological Survey Reports on "Underground Waters" their geology and utilization, these being similar to reports on surface river systems. Water-levels constantly changing from season to season, and from month to month, have a great bearing on productiveness of soils. The driving of artesian wells must be governed by a knowledge of these underground water-flows which penetrate the geologic strata. Gas fields, as a rule, conform to certain geologic horizons: for example, in Kansas and Missouri gas is found only at the base of the Pennsylvania, in the Cherokee shale. It is also true that certain geologic horizons are eminently water bearers. It is known that the St. Peter sandstone, where the other conditions are favorable, is one of the most prominent reservoirs for artesian waters. The uses of artesian wells, arise from their value in supplying water to domestic purposes, as a source of mineral waters; to furnish water for irrigation; for protection against fire; for the development of power for manufacturing purposes; for the production of heat. Last, but not least, the importance of the artesian well as a geologic agent, which is in itself a matter of great scientific interest; as in the study of the "New Madrid Earthquake," and similar phenomena.

We may close this brief review of the soils of our State by indulging in a vision forward, a prophecy of the greater productiveness when more scientific methods in agriculture will preserve the soil in shape to be useful to man for an indefinitely long time to keep as near as possible rock decay that supplies new plant food, addition, up to the erosion processes, subtraction, in fitting, adjusting, in other words, the balance sheet of fertility of soils, a sort of legacy left by one generation to the next, for our race-preservation.

In the state of nature the rocks continually disintegrate and lime, phosphates, and alkalies are at the demand of the natural vegetation, which, dying returns these regularly to the soil, possibly making up the

loss of these elements by water leaching. When, however, man places the fields under tribute to himself, to produce annually large crops of food plants for mankind, the soil loses yearly two to six hundred pounds per acre of the natural plant food, and surface water also robs the bare fields for many months of the year of its food wealth.

Man must resort to fertilizers and to rotation of crops, to stay in a measure the pauperizing of the soil. All the lands of dense populations of past ages show worn out soils from long continued cropping, and our own virgin soil must be preserved from the same fate by special exertion, if possible.

The reader of this review of the geology and soils of our State must have perceived a certain oneness of aim in the writer's mind which led to the selection of material from a large documental source; the aim has not been to awaken the student mind with simply interesting facts about our State, it has been the purpose to arouse a sense of mind nobility, dignity, in existence as a part of this wonderful planet of ours, of a certain ownership in the same. Our State, the smallest in the Union of States, yet an appreciable part, a type, a text of the whole of mankind.

We can do no better than to show to the world how a Rhode Island citizen can stand four-square in realizing his duty, obligation to humanity at large. He is not to look as in the old way at the world as an interesting toy to be enjoyed for a season and then cast aside. Certain privileges rest upon the shoulders of the new citizen as he investigates the rocks, and applies the sciences in enlarging industries, and in conserving the wealth of the soils of our State.

One of the text books on Rhode Island geology which we have referred to as the most carefully prepared, and best illustrated of all the Governmental helps to the better understanding of our State's natural resources, was compiled and issued under the direction of Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, late Professor of Geology in Harvard University, and his interest in and proximity to us, causes us to regard him as a sympathetic co-laborer in the development of Rhode Island.

We can do no better than to close this chapter with a few sentences from his pen taken from the closing chapter of his interesting book, "Man and the Earth."

"The identity of man and the realm in which he dwells. There is good reason to believe that the main idea embodied in the philosophy which regards the world as essentially kin to ourselves is to be that held by the men of the hereafter. The whole trend of the understanding as to the relation of man to the realm leads to the conclusion that whatever else he may be, he is the sum of a series of actions linked with all that has gone on upon this earth.

"Already the more discerning see that our race have come to the beginning of their mastery of this world by penetrating into its meanings, and further knowledge can only increase the clearness and sufficiency of this vision. We may assume that our successors will, generation by generation, be more and more inspired by this understanding; that they will come to see the world as a wider aspect of themselves.

"If the above suggested view as to the trend of thought of men as to their relations with nature be true, then we have not long to wait until the care for the economical resources of the earth which has been advocated in the first chapters of this book, and for which people are already prepared, will be merged in a larger care for the sphere as a part of man from which he has been alienated by ignorance but with which he is to be reconciled by knowledge. Seeing, as he must, for it is written on earth and sky, the oneness of nature and intelligence as its master, man is sure to go forward unto the higher life of understanding out of which will come a sense of which we see barely the traces in our time, of his duty by the earth. At present, the conception as to our place in the realm is so new, so confused with the ancient misunderstandings, that it is difficult to see how we can do the first part of our task by coöperating with the conditions which have made for the advance which has brought us to the gates of the new life. Certain directions for our endeavors are, however, plain.

"To bring men to an appreciation of their station as masters of the earth it is necessary that they be effectually taught the nature of that relation. This is, indeed the part of modern science, but we are as yet far from its accomplishment. So far as science is now passing to the body of the people, it is in the form of special, though elementary, knowledge of this or that group of the facts. Of such, men may have an endless amount and yet not be nearer to the understanding of the important truth; the need is to have this truth taught as a gospel. It has to go on to men with the quality of religion, by the way of imagination and the emotions with which it is conjoined. There is reason to hope that we are at the beginning of the process which is surely to require generations for its accomplishment. At best this enlargement will be slowly brought about and it cannot be expected immediately to affect the common folk. Unless the world of men should become philosophers, we must look in the future as in the past for the leading spirits, the rare men, to be guides to the new dispensation, the masses following in the ancient dumb way—taking their light not directly from nature, but in the good old way, mediately through their prophets.

"Something may be done to hasten the growth of a better state of mind as to man's relation to nature by a much-needed change in our

methods of teaching science. We now present the realm to beginners as a group of fragments labelled astronomy, geology, chemistry, physics, and biology, each, as set forth, appearing to him as a little world in itself, with its own separate life, having little to do with its neighbors. It is rare, indeed, in a very considerable experience with youths to find one who has gained any inkling as to the complete unity of nature. Seldom it is even with those who attain mastery in some one of these learnings, that we find a true sense as to the absolute oneness of the realm, or the place of man as the highest product of its work. This is the inevitable position of those whose task it is to advance the frontiers of knowledge. The mass of their knowledge required to make way in any field is so great that little can be known of any other domain. But this situation of the investigator needs not be of the ordinary man. Save for the merest trifle of knowledge which he gains by the simplest individual enquiries he must take this nature on faith in his teachers. So far from trying to compass the learning of the smallest bit of the realm, he needs be limited to the little of it that will best serve to enlarge his understandings of the world as a part of himself.

"In the revision of our project concerning the share of natural science in our scheme of popular education—a revision long overdue and now sorely requiring action—we need begin by determining, first of all, what of its truths have cardinal value from the point of view of conduct; what of them, in a word, help to dutifulness by ennobling the conception of man's place in nature. Other matters may be taught for other purposes, for their purely intellectual values, or for their economic uses; but the great gain we are to have from the modern knowledge of the world is in the change of attitude it is to bring about in the sense of kinship with the anciently alien realm and of duty by the great inheritance of life. To the making of this new spirit no great body of learning needs go; it will depend for its development far more on the way of approach than on the mass of the knowledge that is gained. So soon as men come to feel themselves as really the children of the world, the tides of affection that instinctively tend toward it, but have been sorely hindered by ancient misunderstandings, will help in the good work, and give us souls reconciled to their great house and eager to help its order."



## CHAPTER III

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### FARMING AND FORESTRY



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The Indian appeared to look upon agriculture as degrading, and the task of tilling the soil fell to the squaws and children. In order to raise corn, the Indians cleared the ground by bruising the trees near the ground and then burning the trunks and roots, thus killing them, and admitting enough light and air to grow crops of corn, beans, pumpkins, peas, and sunflowers. In the spring the dead trees on the corn plots were cut or broken down and burned to furnish ashes for the soil. Cultivation consisted in scratching the ground with sticks or bones and making hills about four feet apart with wooden hoes or clam shells. The corn was dropped in the hills and covered. Fish and crabs were sometimes used for fertilizers. Huts were built in the corn fields to protect from the ravages of birds and beasts. The growing corn was "hilled up" into high hills. Some of the green corn was roasted or boiled, some was dried in the husk over fires or in the sun. The dried corn was husked, shelled, packed in birch bark boxes and deposited in ground holes lined with bark to protect from freezing and moisture. The best ears were saved for seed. The dried corn was cracked in stone mortars and boiled, or pounded into meal and baked in ashes, or parched in the kernel. Succotash was made of corn with some other ingredients as pumpkins, berries, fish, or the flesh of the deer, bear, or raccoon. Grapes and many other wild fruits abounded, and plums and cherries were dried for winter use. Cornmeal mixed with maple sugar and seasoned with dried berries was a dish baked on festive occasions. Bayberry tallow was made into candles to give light and an agreeable odor. The Indian celebrated a "green-corn dance," and a feast of "harvest moon."

"Alas for them! Their day is o'er;  
Their fires are out from hill to shore.  
No more for them the red deer bounds;  
The plow is in their hunting grounds;  
The pale man's axe rings through their woods,  
The pale man's sail skims o'er their floods;  
Their pleasant springs are dry."

Settlers in a new land have to depend for food upon the indigenous plants and animals. They cannot long count on supplies brought from afar. The Colonists were not slow to learn the Indian agriculture and to improve upon it. Bancroft says that the Pilgrims were an agricultural folk, and that one of the reasons why they left Holland was a better opportunity to follow agriculture. Their task was a heavy one, for they

found the land timbered, and their tools were few and crude. However, they soon began the extensive cultivation of corn, pumpkins, squashes, beans, and imported grains. Some crops failed, others proved unprofitable, others flourished. The management of fruits and animals introduced from Europe, had to be learned by slow and costly experiment. Tobacco was grown to a small extent but its use near meeting-houses was forbidden. Horses, swine, cattle and goats belonging to the free holders "ran riot in the woodlands." Rabbits and squirrels were so numerous as to become pests for which bounties were paid. The ravages of wolves and panthers caused the earliest settlers to keep a large part of the sheep and swine on Prudence Island. After the King Philip War, kitchen utensils and other household furnishings became more abundant. Grid-irons, frying pans, and skillets had a place beside the boiling pot. Food prices declined from 1676, and in 1686 pork was 2.10 pounds sterling per barrel; beef 12 shillings per hundred weight; peas 2 shillings per bushel; butter 5 to 6 pence a pound; Indian corn 2 shillings per bushel.

Long before the Revolution, the State was fully settled and many of the great problems of adaptation and acclimatization of animals and crops had been largely solved. In 1760 Douglas writes: "Rhode Island Colony in general is a country for pasture, not for grain; by extending along the shore of the ocean and a great bay, the air is softened by a sea vapour which fertilizeth the soil; their winters are shorter and softer than up island; it is noted for dairies, whence the best cheese made in any part of New England is called abroad 'Rhode Island Cheese.' The most considerable farms are in the Narragansett country. Their highest dairy of one farm ordinarily milks about one hundred and ten cows, cuts two hundred loads of hay, makes about thirteen thousand pounds of cheese, besides butter, and sells off considerable in calves and fatted bullocks. In good land they reckon after the rate of two acres for a milch cow." The farms in the Narragansett country were much larger than those in the northern part of the State, and were cultivated by slaves after the manner of early Virginia. Dr. McSparren, a celebrated South County clergyman, says: "My two negroes were plowing in buckwheat in 1751 for manure for English wheat."

Prior to the Revolution, a famous breed of horses of Spanish origin, called the "Narragansett pacers" was extensively raised in North Kings-town, and vicinity, and many were shipped to the West Indies. Professor Channing in a study of the Narragansett Planters says: "They are a race of large land owners. Unlike the other New England aristocrats of their time, these people derived their wealth from the soil, and not from success in mercantile adventures. \* \* \* In fine, they were large—large for the place and epoch—stock farmers and dairymen. \*

\* \* \* It has been claimed that the progenitors of the Narragansett farmers were superior in birth and breeding to the other New England colonists, and that to this the aristocratic frame of Narragansett society is due. This refinement, however, belongs to the best period of Narragansett social life. It was the result of a peculiar social development and not a cause of that development."

A chopping-bee was a common method among the pioneers of clearing land. The "drive" which brought the day's work to a climax, consisted in felling a great tree on top of a large number of smaller trees cut half off, thus breaking down a whole group of trees at once. The work was dangerous, especially in windy weather, and accidents were frequent. A large part of the farmer's energy was spent in building rail fences and stone walls which were supposed to be horse-high, bull-proof, and pig-tight. Many farmers had smoke-houses in which hams, beef, and bacon were smoked. "Killing time" in November was a very busy season, when fattened cattle and swine were butchered. Pound-keepers, shepherds, fence-viewers, and hog-reeves were appointed to look after cattle, sheep, and swine, and it was a favorite joke to appoint a newly married man as hog-reeve. Pounds are still to be seen in some of the towns. Cows, hogs, and geese were yoked to prevent trespass. One duty of the women was picking geese to secure the feathers to make beds. A stocking was pulled over the head of the bird to keep it from pinching. It is said that one goose in each flock kept awake to watch at night. A young man returning home late at night sometimes started a terrible clamor of all the geese in the neighborhood. The women pickled, dried, and preserved, many fruits, and the preserves were so rich and spicy that they did not need to be hermetically sealed. The icy conditions in the spare bedroom of the farm house were mitigated by heating the sheets with a warming pan which usually hung by the side of the kitchen fireplace. Of the old-time flower garden Miss Earle says: "The earliest list of names of flower-seeds which I have chanced to note was in the *Boston Evening Post*, of March, 1760, and is of much interest as showing to us with exactness the flowers beloved and sought for at that time. They were 'hollyhock, purple Stock, white Lewpins, candy-tuff, cyanus, pink, wall-flower, double larkin-spur, venus navalwort, brompton dock, princess feather, balsam, sweet-scented pease, carnation, sweet williams, annual stock, sweet feabus, yellow lewpins, sunflower, convolus minor, catch-fly, ten week stock, globe thistle, globe amaranthus, nigella, love-lies-bleeding, casent hamen, polianthus, canterbury bells, carnation poppy, india pink, convolus major, Queen Margrets.' This is certainly a very pretty list of flowers, nearly all of which are still loved, though sometimes under other names—thus the Queen Margrets are our asters. And the homely

old English names seem to bring the flowers to our very sight, for we do not seem to be on very friendly intimacy, or very sociable terms with flowers, unless they have what Miss Mitford calls 'decent, well-wearing English names'; we can have no flower memories, no affections that cling to botanical nomenclature. Yet nothing is more fatal to an exact flower knowledge, to an acquaintance that shall ever be more than local, than a too confident dependence on the folk-names of flowers. Our bachelor's-buttons are ragged sailors in a neighboring State; they are corn-pinks in Plymouth, ragged ladies in another town, blue bottles in England, but cyanus everywhere. Ragged robin is, in the garden of one friend, a pink, in another it flaunts as London-pride, while the true glowing London-pride has half a dozen pseudonyms in as many different localities, and only really recognizes itself in the botany. An American primrose is no English primrose, and the English daisy is no country friend of ours in America."

Rhode Island, as its full name indicates, was an agricultural State, and this agricultural stage of society extended from the first settlement in 1636 down to the close of the seventeenth century. During nearly all of the eighteenth century, agriculture was generally practiced with a fair amount of profit while commerce and manufactures were slowly but steadily growing, particularly in the coast towns.

In giving a brief account of the agricultural industry as it was found to exist at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it may be in order here to touch upon the social and economic conditions prevailing at that time. The inland towns varied from about forty to sixty square miles in area, and contained a population of 2,000 to 4,000 people. Some of the inhabitants lived in villages and the remainder lived in farm houses scattered over the township. These villages which distinguished southern New England from some other sections of the country, were calculated to protect from hostile Indians, promote religion, education, and manners, and prevent the degeneracy which may follow a wide dispersal of people in a new region. The village consisted of 50 to 100 dwelling houses, a meeting-house, and a tavern. These houses either extended along a road, or formed a square at some cross-roads, or inclosed a public common. The house-lots contained one to five acres, with barn and outbuildings. The homestead often included several acres of outlying fields, and both tracts were under cultivation. All the people in the villages and outside, had one occupation; they were primarily farmers. There were no skilled mechanics and few learned professional men. The lawyers and doctors lived in the village, and the law was the avenue to public notice and position, and a relatively large proportion of the public men of the period were lawyers. The villages usually had two physicians having some

knowledge of drugs, roots, and herbs. The minister often lived on a small farm, cultivated a garden, and kept a cow. The business men included tavern-keepers, and the owners of fulling mills, sawmills, gristmills, and tanneries, iron works, acid works, etc. The mechanics were blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, and cobblers. The relatively large number of artisans found in the small towns showed that they depended partly on agriculture. The sawmills, gristmills, and other mills used water power which sometimes failed in summer.

The overshot, undershot and breast wheels of early days were crude wooden wheels, difficult to install. The iron turbine of later date, although an improvement on the old wheels, was, for a time, not well adapted for the propulsion of textile machinery requiring high speed and regular movement. Water power was further limited in application because it could be used only at or near the place where it was generated: it could be carried by belts and ropes only a few hundred feet. Notwithstanding these limitations, the early settlers utilized water to a remarkable extent. The fisherman travelling to-day along the water courses fails not to note with pensive eye the vestiges of dam, wheel and tail-race. In the language of Horace Keach: "The little mill has rotted down, the dam is gone and the speckled trout play undisturbed in the crannies of the pool where the old flume once stood. Here is the site of the turning lathe where were made spinning wheels, the piano fortés of our industrious grandmothers. Those solid oak high-backed chairs still to be found in the farm houses of Burrillville and the adjoining towns, were mostly made here. Heavy old men who would break down in the light fancy chair of modern times were safe in the old substantial seat of the Quaker pattern. At last hoe handles, scythe nibs, and bobbins were turned here." Cotton factories scattered through the towns were operated by the native inhabitants, and the farmers earned cash in winter by turning cotton spools in the little shops erected on the brooks. Many farms had "watered meadows," where large crops of grain and grass were grown. Ditches skirting the hillsides and leading from brooks and springs provided the irrigation. The water was collected in small reservoirs during the day and run on to the meadows at night so as to prevent the wilting of the crops. The tanneries furnished the leather for the shoes, aprons and breeches which were much worn by those engaged in hard manual labor. Cider mills were numerous, and cider was a favorite drink at meals, house-raisings, husking-bees, and other occasions. The tavern—a social and political center—was the headquarters on days of general training. Here were held the courts, and town meetings, and here congregated the village topers.

The country store carried goods from the West Indies—molasses,

rum, gin, salt, indigo, sugar, spices. From Europe were displayed broad-cloth and other dress goods, glassware, crockery, and ammunition. It was customary to hang up on hooks fastened to the ceiling many kinds of merchandise. To these stores the farmers brought butter, cheese, pork, and beef, which were among the articles sold to the West Indies. Says Charles Francis Adams: "In every store in which West India goods were sold, and there were no others, behind the counter stood the casks of Jamaica and New England rum, of gin and brandy. Their contents were sold by the gallon, the bottle, or the glass. They were carried away or drunk on the spot."

The coast towns—smaller in area but denser and larger in population—engaged in fishing, ship-building, and trading. Yet even here the maritime industries were not sharply differentiated from the agricultural. Wherever the soil was suitable, farming was engaged in. There were twelve textile mills, mostly cotton, in Rhode Island in 1807. Peace Dale had a woolen mill in 1804. Before 1815, when power looms were introduced, the mills spun the yarn and turned the yarn over to the farmers to be woven at home by the women. The great concentration of textile manufacturing was within a radius of 30 miles of Providence.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, according to P. W. Bidwell, agriculture, although conducted in a careless way, was the mainstay of 90 per cent. of the inhabitants. Very little improvement in many particulars had been made since the first settlement 150 years before. The pioneer stage of clearing the land having passed away, the Colonists settled down to a routine of farming based on their knowledge of the English farming of an earlier date. Although English farming had taken some long strides forward under the direction of Young, Bakewell and others during the eighteenth century, the Colonists were slow to learn and adopt the new methods. The implements were clumsy, the live stock were neglected, the fertilizers were wasted, and rotation of crops was not practiced. Under these conditions the land at length became exhausted or failed to respond to the poor cultivation. Timothy Dwight says in 1823 that "the husbandry of New England is far inferior to that of Great Britain. The principal defects in our husbandry, so far as I am able to judge, are a deficiency in the quantity of labor necessary to prepare the ground for seed, insufficient manuring, the want of a good rotation of crops, and slovenliness in clearing the ground. The soil is not sufficiently pulverized nor sufficiently manured. We are generally ignorant of what crops will best succeed each other, and our fields are covered with a rank growth of weeds."

The typical farm of 100 to 200 acres was divided into three parts,—one part was woodland, one part pasture, and the remainder was devoted

in varying proportions to meadows and cultivated fields. The tilled land rarely exceeded 10 acres, except in the vicinity of such coast and river towns as furnished a market. The farm house was substantially built of heavy white oak frame mortised and tenoned. The barn had a threshing floor with stables on the sides and hay mows above the stables. Hay was also put in sheds or stacked in the fields. The corn crib was raised on stone posts to prevent dampness and the ravages of animals. The farming tools consisted of hoes, rakes, harrows, pitch forks, shovels, plows, carts, and lumber wagons. Nearly all of these were made by the farmers and ironed-off by the blacksmith. Men were skilled in the use of the flail, scythe, sickle, cradle, and winnowing mill. C. S. Flint describes the plow frequently used as follows: "The Carey plough had a clumsy wrought-iron share, a landside and standard made of wood, a wooden mould-board often plated over in a rough manner with pieces of old saw-plates, tin or sheet-iron. The handles were upright, and were held by two pins; a powerful man was required to hold it, and double the strength of team now commonly used in doing the same kind of work. The 'bar-side' plough or the 'bull' plough was also used to some extent. A flat bar formed the land-side, and a big clump of iron shaped a little like the half of a lance-head, served as a point, into the upper part of which a kind of coulter was fastened. The mould-board was wooden and fitted to the irons in the most bungling manner. The action might be illustrated by holding a sharp-pointed shovel back up and thrusting it through the ground." With these wooden plows, two men and several yoke of oxen were often required to plow an acre a day. A cast-iron plow invented in 1797 was a great improvement over the wooden plow, but was little used for many years after its invention. Samuel Dean says the "wooden-toothed harrows are of so little advantage to the land, unless it is merely for covering seeds, that they may be considered as unfit to be used at all. The treading of the cattle that draw them will harden the soil more perhaps, than these harrows will soften it." Timber, stone, and crops were transported in ox-carts—heavy two-wheeled vehicles almost entirely of wood.

Oxen were much used, and on the advantages of using oxen President Dwight says: "The advantages of employing oxen are that they will endure more fatigue, draw more steadily, and surely; are purchased at a smaller price; are kept at less expense; are freer from disease; suffer less from laboring on rough grounds; and perform the labor better; and when by age or accident they become unfit for labor, they are converted into beef. The only advantage of employing horses instead of oxen, is derived from their speed." By 1810 turnpike roads had been built, and then many horses and light wagons were introduced. The oxen were still

retained for plowing, logging, and other heavy work. The horses as well as the cattle, through lack of care, suffered degeneracy, particularly in the northern part of the State. The Narragansett horse was too light and high-spirited for farm work. Rhode Island was noted for large hogs, and 600 pounds was not a very unusual weight. Almost every farm had a few sheep. The establishment of woolen mills was followed by the improvement of sheep and the introduction of the Spanish Merino sheep to mix with the native breeds. The Devonshire cattle imported from New England were bred with the Holland Holsteins from New York to make a breed known as the "native cattle"—lank and lean but hardy. In the Narragansett Bay towns where pasture was abundant and the market good for salted meat, some attention was paid to breeding and improving the cattle, and large amounts of cheese were exported.

Corn was the most reliable crop, and corn and rye were ground in the local mills and made into brown bread, johnnycakes, and pancakes. Corn was also the chief food for fattening poultry, cattle, and swine. It was planted in hills wide apart so that it allowed of cultivation with the harrow as well as with the hoe. Grass was also an important crop. Barley and oats were grown. Buckwheat furnished honey for the bees. The failure of wheat was probably due to the bad management and the vicinity of barberry bushes. The potato—indigenous to America—was almost unknown to the Colonists until reintroduced from Europe by the Irish, and then every farmer planted potatoes. Pumpkins were planted with the corn and used for pies and fodder. Carrots, beets, turnips, peas, beans, and onions were cultivated to a considerable extent particularly in the coast towns. Flax for homespun linen was raised in small amounts, and the seeds were used for making linseed oil. So far as there was any rotation of crops, corn or potatoes for one to three years alternated with rye, oats, or wheat, and then the ground was seeded to grass, to be broken up again in a few years and the land planted as before. Corn was sometimes followed by clover. Fish, seaweeds, ashes, and lime were sparingly applied to the land, but the neglect of the stable and barnyard manure was a striking feature of the early farming. The farmer knew that such a fertilizer increased the crops, but as has been said by an able writer, there was little incentive to raise bumper crops in the inland towns, because the roads were poor and there was no market near at hand for farm produce. Other probable causes of the stagnation and decline in agriculture were the scarcity of farm labor, the discouragements of frost and drought, the gradual migration of hardy young men to western Massachusetts and New York, and the preference of some for the more lucrative maritime employments. Restless and obstreperous spirits chafing under the yoke of puritanical austerity and not satisfied with the small in-

comes from the farms, found it easier to move to an unsettled region of virgin soil and forest than to improve the old homestead. One writer dilating on the conservatism of the times declares that "obstinacy of old ideas quenched the spirit of improvement. Superior intelligence was not honored but ridiculed in any except the minister or doctor. The experimenter was not encouraged but laughed at. If a choicer spirit arose who did not plant as many acres of corn as his fathers did, and that too, in the 'old of the moon'; if he did not hoe as many times as his father and grandfather did; if, in fine, he did not wear the same kind of homespun dress, and adopt the same religious views and prejudices,—he was shunned in company, and looked upon as a visionary." Bidwell says the farmers practiced a "self-sufficient agriculture" and that was all the prevailing economic conditions called for.

The rough and rocky lands, so far as they were cleared, were used for pastures and orchards. A native grass introduced into England was there called "timothy," and afterwards reintroduced from England as English grass. Apples were the principal fruit and every farm had an orchard. Dried apples were used in winter to make pies, turn-overs, tarts, and slumps. The inferior portion of the fruit was made into cider. Peaches, pears, plums, cherries, and quinces were also grown. The orchards lacked care, and the fruit was mostly of poor quality. Wood for fuel and for the construction of buildings, tools, furniture, wagons, and kitchen utensils was in great demand, and every farmer was a woodsman. The open fire-places consumed enormous quantities of wood, and the early settlers practiced wholesale destruction of timber. But little first growth was standing in 1810. At this time there were few or no official reports on the yield of crops. Bidwell gathers from various travellers and other sources these figures for southern New England: Indian corn, 25 to 30 bushels per acre; rye, 15 bushels; potatoes, 100 bushels; barley, 20 bushels; buckwheat, 15 to 20 bushels; wheat, 10 to 15 bushels. These figures are for the period 1790 to 1810. In 1909 the average yield per acre for the whole state of Rhode Island was for corn, 41 bushels; potatoes, 118 bushels; hay,  $1\frac{1}{3}$  tons.

After the War of 1812 there was a revival of business, and an increase in population, a large proportion of whom were mill operatives. Foreigners now began to come in. So that despite the drawbacks to farming, we are told by W. A. Greene that "on the 5th of September, 1820, there were counted 126 wagons loaded with fruit and vegetables standing on Market Square, while only seven years before the presence of 49 such wagons had excited surprise and remark. In those days the marketing of the townsmen was all done at Market Square." From this time forth manufactures and commerce flourished and enlarged, and by

the middle of the nineteenth century the New England railroads and steamboats stimulated travel and traffic—particularly the coast trade in cotton, coal, and other domestic merchandise—a larger trade than the old West India and East India trade which nearly vanished. The development of the city of Providence and vicinity was followed by a rise of manufactures in the rural towns and the consequent demand for raw materials and fuels for the mills. The time from 1820 to the close of the Civil War was a period of transition from the “self-sufficient agriculture” to a commercial agriculture which supplied much of the food, lumber, and firewood to the non-agricultural population. The Budlong farm which began business in 1850 in the town of Cranston is one of the largest vegetable farms in New England.

The agricultural societies formed by leading politicians and professional men of early days did much by way of public addresses and printed circulars to spread a knowledge of farming as it was carried on in England and other countries. Experiments were encouraged, and premiums were offered. The Society for the Promotion of Agriculture and the Useful Arts was formed in 1802. A. Robbins in an address before the society at the time of its formation remarks: “Our husbandry is only the traditional husbandry of our fathers. What they introduced we have continued. What it was a century ago, it is now. It has remained stationary at that point. With great means of improvement, we have made none.” Mr. Robbins urges an increase in the production of grains and grasses of many varieties, and of fruits, particularly in the counties of Providence and Kent. He declares there are no good peaches, cherries, plums, or grapes; that the stealing of fruit is the cause of its non-production. Largely through the influence of this Society, acts were passed prohibiting the killing of deer, and the setting of fires to burn woodlands. The educational activities of these ‘gentlemen farmers’ had but little influence on the rank and file of the farmers of the inland towns. In 1820 the Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry was organized, and continued its work of holding meetings and fairs until 1885 when its work was given over to the State Board of Agriculture created by legislative act at about that time.”

Under a resolve of the legislature of 1839, a geological and agricultural survey was made in 1840 by Dr. C. T. Jackson. The report based on this survey contains statistical matter relating to the agriculture of that period. Analytical tables of soils, peats, limestones, and coal, are given. Rocks and minerals are analyzed and described according to the mineralogical methods and nomenclature of that day. Farm reports concerning crops raised and sold, expenses, receipts, and so forth are presented and commented on. These reports are mostly from farmers living

in the Narragansett Basin. In the tier of western towns, first settled to some extent by persons who escaped thither from the turmoil of the Revolution, "book farming" was not indulged in.

Quoting from Dr. James B. Angell: "The life in my native town during the years of my boyhood was very simple and frugal. The population was of pure English descent. I think my father within the period of my recollection, brought the first Irish maid-servant into the town. Farming was the chief occupation. There were half a dozen cotton factories of moderate size scattered through the town; but the operatives were drawn from the farms and were all Americans. The farmers got their limited supply of money from the sale chiefly of wood, charcoal, and potatoes, in Providence, and of milk and butter to the operatives in the mills. Some added to their income by turning bobbins and spools in the winter in the small shops erected on little streams upon their farms. They found a ready market for their products in the cotton factories through the State. The practice of the greatest economy was necessary to make a small farm support a family. In 1840 the census-taker permitted me to accompany him in his gig over a large part of the town. I think we entered only two or three houses which had any other carpets or rugs than those which the occupants had made from rags. I believe that there were not more than two pianos in the town. There was no public library; there were very few books in private libraries. Although the town was only twelve miles from Brown University, I was the first boy from Scituate to graduate from the college. The amusements of the country folk were few and simple. Every farmer was expected to take his family and his hired men 'to the shore' at least once, when the haying season was over. At the time of the August full moon the roads were well filled with these pilgrims to the sea." Sunday was not kept as it was in Connecticut and Massachusetts. It was the day for fishing and hunting and for visiting relatives and friends.

T. R. Hazard in an address delivered before the Aquidneck Agricultural Society in 1853, advocates the selling of meats, wool, and dairy products, instead of selling vegetables, grains and hay; the plowing of weeds, vines and other debris into the ground instead of throwing away all such refuse; and the sheltering of stock and fodder. He says that manures should not be squandered on leachy soils, and that large teams kept on the roads hauling fertilizers, impoverish the farms. Horace Keach says that Burrillville land at the time of its first survey sold for  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents an acre, and later from \$5 to \$1500 per acre near factories; that the farmers are kept poor by trying to till too much land; that the "clergymen labor with their own hands because there are many who do not like to hear a man preach unless he works." As an illustration of the

old-time neighborliness, Mr. Keach cites the case of a farmer whose barn with contents were burned by lightning in the summer of 1856. Friends collected several hundred dollars to aid the farmer, and neighbors met and built him a new barn.

The opening of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1869 shifted the grain and meat producing industries westward. Rhode Island fields and pastures reverted to forest. The rural population declined for a period of half a century. Along with the neglect or abandonment of farms went also a decline in the small mechanical and manufacturing industries of the upland towns. The tendency to concentrate these industries in large city plants with improved machinery and division of labor drew the artisans from the villages to the cities. The network of steam and electric railways, the extremely large number of which are detrimental to the country as separating families and tying up to hard and exacting labor a vast army of operatives who might otherwise engage in fundamental vocations, take away the trade of the country stores. The hiring of immigrant laborers releases the native young Americans to seek urban employments.

The tide, however, is turning away from the city. Abandoned farms are being reclaimed. Good roads, rural mails, telephones, automobiles, travelling libraries, reading clubs, electric lights, and power transmission are transforming country life. The United States Department of Agriculture, State boards of agriculture, land-grant colleges, experiment stations, and institutes send forth technical and popular literature. Special commissions survey agricultural resources, loan money and machinery, and inspect cattle, nurseries, and orchards. Farm bureaus furnish experts to examine farms, make demonstrations, and recommend management. The school garden movement is changing our conceptions of the purposes and needs of the rural school. The grange is an organization of practical farmers for the promotion of the educational, social, co-operative, and legislative interests of its members. State and county fairs display the actual results of husbandry. The agricultural exposition at Springfield foreshadows a great revival of farming in New England. The agriculture of the twentieth century is so large and multifarious as to defy brief description. Farming is to-day a money-making occupation like manufacturing and banking. Crops are produced for sale and for profit, and not primarily for home consumption. Of the new agriculture, there was none in early New England.

But the glorious open country has drawbacks. The Commission on Country Life, in discussing special deficiencies, refers to intemperance; to the inequalities of taxation of farm property; the scarcity of farm labor; neglect of the laws of sanitation; speculative land holdings; the

"fringe" of cities as low-grade communities; the driving of hoboes from cities into rural sections; "horticultural hoodlums" who give the farmer a running fight to save his orchards, and vineyards. An editorial in a leading newspaper commenting on the evils of over-crowding the cities with immigrants remarks that "the ideal place for nine-tenths of these newcomers is a farming region." While the editorial is measurably true, in saying that "there is no State that will not profit from a certain amount of this new infusion of industry," still the question arises as to how far unrestricted immigration should be allowed to use up the agricultural opportunities of the native inhabitants and their descendants. In the language of Professor E. A. Ross: "I am not of those who consider humanity and forget the nation, who pity the living but not the unborn. To me, those who are to come after us stretch forth beseeching hands as well as the masses on the other side of the globe. Nor do I regard America as something to be spent quickly and cheerfully for the benefit of pent-up millions in the backward lands. What if we become crowded without their ceasing to be so?"

When our forefathers landed at Plymouth they found a continent remarkable not only for the beauty of its primeval forests and the richness of its virgin soils, but also for freedom from native destructive insects and plant diseases. Were it not for the curious mania of many Americans for exotic trees, shrubs, and all things foreign, a Federal embargo in early days would have prevented the introduction of these pests whose ravages now result in losses to livestock, timber, grain, and fruits, running into millions of dollars a day. Years ago, European countries absolutely prohibited all entries of nursery stock from the United States.

It is evident that the Americanization of America is a big task that needs to be face up and performed. A mere statement of the unfavorable conditions suggests the corrective forces to be set in motion. Education, religion, co-operation, publicity, loyalty, initiative, and constructive leadership are the forces that make for progress and righteousness. The handicaps which are not naturally incidental to the business of farming, such as treason, socialism, vice, and filth, can be removed, and the countryside can be made clean, attractive, and law-abiding. The natural and predatory foes of agriculture, like insects and plant diseases, can be controlled; the dog nuisance abated; destructive pests like rats exterminated.

Beneficial birds and other animals must be protected. Undeveloped water powers, mineral deposits and other natural resources can be advertised. One of the needs in Rhode Island is a land classification which shall select out these scattered areas of relatively rich, moist, and tillable soil from the other land better adapted to orchards, sheep pastures, and

forestry. A Washington expert connected with the Bureau of Soils writes: "There is no fear that the soils of New England will fail to respond to proper treatment and to careful tillage. The production per acre of corn in New England" (and this is true specifically of Rhode Island) "exceeds the average for the States of the corn belt; the average yields of potatoes exceed all others except in restricted areas under irrigation; and wherever New England soils compete their product excels, or at least makes favorable comparison with, that of any other section of the United States."

The total capital invested in farming in the State in 1890 was \$25,000,000; in 1900 it was nearly \$27,000,000; in 1905, \$29,250,000; in 1910, \$33,000,000; in 1915, \$38,000,000. In 1900 the average value of a farm with its buildings and equipment was \$4,909; in 1910 it was \$6,234; in 1915, about \$7,500. In the decade from 1900 to 1910, the value of land per acre, averaged for all the State, increased from \$29.46 to \$33.86. From the summary of a review of Rhode Island farming in the twentieth century, by Dr. Howard Edwards, we quote: "To the question, why not more agriculture in Rhode Island, then, the answer may be made that there is no reason inherent either in our soil or in our climate or in the demand for farm products among us. One thing only operates to prevent our agriculture from being quite a prosperous and therefore a growing industry. That is the lack of organization among producers and distributors of such a nature that the cost of distribution might be lessened, a larger share of the price paid by the consumer might come to the farmer-producer, a more easily available and trustworthy market for his produce might be open to the small producer, and the reward for better quality in the goods produced might be such as to encourage the most strenuous effort toward further improvement."

The golden age of the nineteenth century with its public lands, primeval forests, wealth of wild life, and cheap food is gone, never to return. The man who now owns a few acres of land which he cultivates to advantage, has the best assurance which the present age can give, of a life of peace, happiness, and independence.

Rhode Island is divided into two physiographic regions—the Narragansett Basin, and the western upland which is a remnant of a lofty mountain range, and which comprises the western two-thirds of the State. The bed rocks of the Narragansett Basin consist of a carboniferous deposition of coal, shales, sandstones, and conglomerates, and these fine-grained rocks have so contributed to the overlying glacial drift as to render this soil, known as the Miami stony loam, entirely suitable for general farming. This is a region of hardwoods—mainly oaks and maples, mixed with some ash, hickory, chestnut, elm, tulip, and poplar.

Cedar swamps and thickets of birch, alder, willow, and scrub oak are found. Pitch pine and juniper occur on the sandy plains. White pine is local and scarce. A large part of the land of this basin is under intensive cultivation.

That portion of Rhode Island lying northwesterly of a line beginning at Cumberland Mills, thence running west to the meridian  $71^{\circ} 30'$ , thence south along this meridian to Hunt's River, thence southwesterly to Potter Hill, may be described as the State's pine-hardwood region. Here are found hills, ridges, hummocks, eskers, moraines, gullies, swamps, sand plains, boulder trains, and other topographic residuals of the Cretaceous peneplain and glacial invasion,—all of which go to make up a varied forest physiography. Springs, streams, and lakes abound. The ledges and bed rocks are mostly granite-gneiss with occasional igneous intrusions of diorite. The elevation ranges from 400 to 800 feet above sea level. The normal average annual temperature for the months of April, May, June, July, and August is about  $62^{\circ}$  F., and for the year about  $50^{\circ}$  F. The average precipitation for the five months named is about 18 inches, and for the year 45 inches. Owing to the diversified topography, the rainfall, temperature, and frost are quite variable even within narrow area limits. Post-glacial erosion has carried the finer soil particles down into the valleys and exposed the boulders and coarser materials on the slopes. Shaler has shown that gravelly soils which, through the slow process of weathering, annually release phosphorus, lime, iron, potassium, and other plant foods, are less quickly exhausted than rich bottom-lands of alluvial origin. The principal soil types of this upland region are the Gloucester stony loam, the Alton stony loam, and the Warwick sandy loam, with here and there small areas of Miami stony loam, of Norfolk coarse sand, and of swamp-land, scattered over the region.

The Gloucester stony loam, which comprises practically all the land not immediately adjacent to the principal streams, is a light brown sandy loam containing some gravel, abounding with boulders and outcropping bed-rock, and having a sub-soil made up of rock fragments. This soil is derived, not from glacial deposit to any large extent, but, from the immediately underlying rocks which are coarsely crystalline granites, gneisses, and schists of great geological age—Archean, Algonkian, possibly some Cambrian,—that have been broken down by the mechanical processes of weathering, with relatively little chemical decomposition, thus furnishing the fine gravel characteristic of the soil. The over-riding of this region by glacial ice evidently removed a large amount of material, but left little debris behind. The soil is loose, porous, unproductive, and quickly affected by drought. It bears a prolific growth of shrubs and

herbs which thrive on acid soils such as cranberries, huckleberries, and other species of the Ericaceae, and trees like chestnut, alder, oak, willow, birch, and pine. Most of this land is too rough and rocky for intensive cultivation, but is adapted to forestry, orcharding, and small fruits. About 5 per cent. is cleared and cultivated. A better phase of the type is found at the foot of slopes and along ravines where grains and garden vegetables may be profitably grown.

The Alton stony loam borders the upland ponds and streams, often in the form of terrace remnants, and is the soil upon which the white pine appears to reach its highest development. It is a gray or brown sandy loam to a depth of about eight inches, and contains some gravel and varying amounts of small rounded boulders. The sub-soil is a mixture of gray or yellow sand and gravel containing a large amount of rounded and partially stratified boulders and coarse gravel.

The Warwick sandy loam is a mellow brown soil containing some fine gravel, but is free from coarse gravel and stones. It is adapted to white pine and scarlet oak. It is rather too light, sandy and dry for black oak and white oak to make a rapid growth, although these timbers grown here are of good quality, being fine-grained, hard, and elastic.

The region in question contains about five hundred square miles of woodland and may be fairly termed an optimum region for white pine which is here capable, according to conservative estimate, of a sustained annual yield of 100 million board feet of pine lumber. Since 1870 water sawmills have gradually fallen into decay, being supplanted by portable steam mills whose operators have practiced clear cutting without any discrimination in all kinds of growth, usually leaving no white pines of seed-bearing size on the tracts lumbered. One dire result of this destructive lumbering has been that woodlands from which were cut heavy growths of pine, oak, and chestnut, have now very little pine reproduction. For only by chance would a pine spring up on a tract from which the seed trees were all cut. Many pine lots logged 5, 10, even 30 years ago, show to-day little or no pine, but only a growth of bushes, birches, scrub oaks, and other hardwoods; nor is much attention paid to the reproduction and improvement of the hardwoods; little or no provision is made for a supply of hardwood seedlings to replace the exhausted stumps, so that the sprout forest also is steadily deteriorating. Thus it comes about that, during the last century, a want of knowledge and interest in the most elementary principles of forest management on the part of farmers and lumbermen has resulted in the gradual curtailment of the lumber business itself. Reservation of one to three white pines six or more inches in diameter on each acre of land cut over, would have gone far towards assuring the reproduction of this valuable timber tree upon which certain

of the towns of western Rhode Island have depended so much in the past for private enterprise and public revenue. With the disappearance of timber and with no wise provision for its replacement, some of these towns now find themselves facing gradual depopulation and increasing indebtedness. Any town that tries to raise the debt by an even more rigorous application of the general property tax to the forest, and by opposing all efforts to secure fair and reasonable forest tax legislation, will only succeed in discouraging forest investment and protection, and in accentuating its present financial difficulties.

Examination of many acres of cut-over land shows conclusively the enormous economic importance of the scattered seed-tree method of handling pine-oak woodlands. A sparse to good pine reproduction is usually found within a radius of 100 feet from any reserved seed tree, and many instances are noted where seed has blown and taken root at a distance of 400 feet, especially on the side opposite the prevailing winds. Tornadoes and the transportation of seed by animals account for the rare occurrence of young white pines at greater distances from the source of seed supply. Absence or scarcity of pine seedlings in forest tracts may be accounted for by recent forest fires, by the presence of a thick carpet of pine needles or other leaf litter which prevents the seed from reaching mineral soil, by the lack of sufficient light, by physiological dryness in the upper layers of soil produced by the raw acid humus sometimes found in deeply shaded places, and by the destruction of seeds or seedlings by squirrels, insects, or fungi. Cutting of the timber eliminates some of these deleterious conditions, and enables the seed to take root and grow. However, only a very sparse reproduction of seedlings may sometimes be found on cut-over lands where care has been taken to reserve seed trees; such a condition must usually find its explanation in the drying out of the soil under the direct rays of the sun, in the presence of grasses and weeds which occupy the ground and further reduce the soil moisture, and in the presence of the pine weevil, and possibly of fungi. The white pine is adapted to our dry sandy soils because its foliage has a small surface, thick epidermis, and depressed stomata, calculated to decrease transpiration. The small number of root hairs and the histological structure of the wood do not allow so rapid flow of water as the abundant root hairs and other structural properties of deciduous trees. Since pine is a shade-enduring tree, its bole does not clean rapidly of lower branches; hence the economic importance of thick natural reproduction and close planting in order that the dense shade may kill the low limbs and thus produce long and clear butt logs.

The species composing the low undergrowth varies with the density of shade and other conditions. Pine forest has Gaultheria, Pyrola, Vac-

cinum, Viburnum, Rubus, etc. In deciduous forest the herbs and shrubs are mostly larger and perhaps less xerophytic than those in pine woods; and include many members of the Lillium, Rosa, and Heath genera. When the timber is cut off the herbs which had thrived in the shade and moist air, flower very early on the cut-over land, and gradually diminish in numbers until, with the return of forest cover, they re-establish themselves. Saprophytes and hemisaprophytes (orchids, pyrolas, Indian pipe, etc.), abound in thick pine woods. Beech and hickory are limited to the richer upland soils; maple, ash, and tulip are found in rich swamp lands. Sassafras is occasionally seen in warm sites. Junipers, cherries, and plums occur along the line of old fences. The success of any species in its struggle for soil occupation appears to depend not only upon the factors of site, but upon its own biological characters, such as rapidity of growth, vitality of seed, sprouting capacity, fire resistance, and relative immunity from the attacks of enemies. The reaction between the ecologic factors and biological characters, such as rapidity of growth, vitality of seed, sprouting capacity, fire resistance, and relative immunity from the attacks of enemies. The reaction between the ecologic factors and biologic characters is a matter of much complexity and mystery.

The choice between agriculture and forestry in the apportionment of land is a nice problem involving many varying factors. But while it is rather difficult to lay down general principles to govern such choice, it is clearly an error in public policy to give permanently to agriculture, soils which respond to cultivation only temporarily, and which become sterile as soon as the forest humus is exhausted. The forest enriches and improves the soil. The woods-soil or humus supplies water, nitrogen, and other plant-foods. Without this humus, some of the soils are merely dry barren sands.

Very clearly in Colonial times steps were taken to conserve timber and regulate the lumber industry. In 1640 Governor William Coddington at Newport made an agreement with the Indian sachems that if any Indian should build a fire at any time and should not extinguish it before leaving it and thus cause damage, the damage should be adjudged and the Indian tried by the law of the Plantations. An order of 1638 required that two men view the timber on the common and apportion to each person according to his needs. Timber left on the ground more than one year after felling was forfeited to the town. Orders of 1650 and 1666 imposed fines for taking timber from the commons without consent of the town, and an order of 1651 forbade the cutting of timber on the common purposely for the pasturage of goats. A court held at Newport in 1639 forbade two parties engaged in sawing lumber from exporting any timber from Newport without a license. In this same year two men were re-

quired to furnish the town with sawed boards at 8 shillings per hundred and with half-inch boards at 7 shillings, delivered at the waterside, and with clapboards at 12 pence a foot. In 1640 Portsmouth at a public meeting, granted permission to export pipestaves and clapboards under the direction of the town. An order of 1647 imposed treble damages for trespassing on timber. The General Assembly in 1704 passed an act forbidding the setting of fires to burn woods at any time except from March 10 to May 10, or on Saturday or Sunday within this period. In the same year the British Parliament in order to preserve naval stores, passed an act applying to the Colonies, imposing a fine of 5 pounds for cutting pitch pine trees under 12 inches in diameter and not standing within an actual enclosure or fence; also a fine of 10 pounds for wilfully firing any woods in which there were trees prepared for the making of pitch or tar without giving due notice to the person who had prepared the trees for the making of the pitch. The penalty of 30 shillings provided in the act of the Colonial General Assembly of 1704 was increased to 10 pounds by an act of 1722, with a proviso that if the offender had no estate he might be imprisoned or whipped. An act of 1731 provided surveyors of lumber for each town, and an act of 1743 imposed a fine for cutting timber without leave on the land of another, and placed the burden of proof on the defendant. An act of 1750 forbade the setting of fires "in the woods in any part of this Colony, to run at large, at any time or times of the year, under any pretence whatsoever" under penalty of 50 pounds for the first offense and 100 pounds for the second, one-half to be paid to the informer and one-half to the poor of the town. From this time forth there was little or no other forest legislation or regulation until 1872 when an act was passed providing a penalty of two years' imprisonment for the malicious burning of woods.

In 1680, Capt. Richard Arnold turned his attention to building some of the first sawmills. He had one at Woonsocket, and secured the right to dam the Woonasquatucket at Centredale in 1700, and at Georgiaville and Stillwater in 1702, and to dam the West River, where he erected a sawmill, near Wanskuck, in 1706. About the year 1700 he built a mill near the southerly end of the dam of the Centredale Worsted Mills, on land belonging to Richard Pray. In 1750, the farmers banded together and repaired this mill and set it in operation, forming a company composed of the following shareholders in 1765: Richard Coman, Stephen Angell, Nathaniel Day, Charles Olney, Nehemiah Smith and William Goddard. The mill changed hands many times as the owners died, and in 1800 the owners were three—James Angell, Richard Coman and William Goddard. Logs beginning to be scarce and the mill being decayed, it was finally abandoned about 1840. Seth Mowry, who, with William B. Irons,

engaged in the manufacture of lumber in 1857, says that there were at least 15 sawmills with wooden water-wheels and up-and-down saws in the town of Glocester, where edged pine lumber of good quality sold for \$12.50 per thousand board feet. Up-and-down mills sawed timber in this State unto 1870.

In 1906 an act was passed, largely through the influence and efforts of Gen. Hunter C. White, establishing a commission of forestry. The commissioner of forestry offers to assist land owners and lumbermen in matters pertaining to reforestation, protection, and the cutting of woodlots. Since the establishment of the forestry department, a knowledge of practical forestry has been diffused by means of printed reports, pamphlets, leaflets, public speeches, personal correspondence, the examination of woodland, and the preparation of forest working plans. Many small plantations of forest trees have been established, and many thinnings and improvement cuttings have been made on a considerable acreage in different parts of the State. Laws have been enacted providing for the exemption of forest plantations from taxation; the regulation of the setting of fires in the open air; forest wardens; forest patrol in times of drought; telephone service for forest protection; fire lookout stations; preventative measures by railroads; penalties for those who set fires through carelessness and negligence.

In Forestry as in other arts, first things should come first. It will be quite generally conceded that protection from fire is first and fundamental to nearly all other forestry operations. With the present State organization and small amounts of money appropriated for forestry, forest fires are properly the central interest of this department. There is need, to be sure, of an increase in the annual appropriation, in order to enable the forestry department to improve the system of forest protection, to give more assistance to land owners in woodlot management; and to pay for the clerical assistance and printing required to carry on educational work. But it is an open question with practical foresters qualified to review the situation, as to whether this State can really afford to spend much money in State forest reserves and State forest nurseries. It is very easy for a State to spend money in forestry and other projects. It is not always so easy to show actual results warranting the expenditures. It is easy to figure out on paper, according to the mathematical formulas of forest finance, the expectation value of a stand of planted seedling. It is not so easy to handle the plantation for 50 or 100 years and realize the expectations. If one can cite examples of large profits from certain blocks of planted European forests, one can also cite instances where "the results actually achieved under excellent management, afford additional evidence if such were needed, that great schemes of afforestation are

doomed to failure as far as any direct monetary profits are concerned." Even in Germany, where artificial regeneration has been the principal method employed for a long time, there is a growing tendency to follow nature more closely. Furthermore, Gifford Pinchot, former chief forester of the United States, well says that in a forested region like Rhode Island, where a "well stocked tract of natural forest can be purchased for less money than it would cost to plant such a tract with forest nursery stock, forest planting is of much less importance than conservative lumbering and fire protection."

These strictures on forest planting relate chiefly to planting on a large scale, in localities favoring the less expensive natural reproduction. Private owners in this State have taken a commendable interest in forest planting, and have established many small plantations, particularly within the last ten years. The Russell plantation started in 1874 at Potowomut deserves special mention. Reliable forest nurseries in neighboring States now make it practicable for forest owners in this State to purchase at reasonable prices, seedlings and transplants of valuable species. The time is come when the State would do well to own and control for forestry purposes, some of the forest land at the head of streams.

The forests of Rhode Island contain many oaks whose leaves persist through the winter and drop on the ground in late springtime. Again, in the autumn, the ground is covered with the dead leaves of other deciduous trees. These leaves are easily ignited and make hot fires if the weather happens to be dry. Rapidly burning surface fires, driven by high winds, often gain great headway before being discovered. Even when the smoke is promptly sighted, its location and distance are sometimes difficult to determine. A warden seeing smoke may take a long, hard ride only to find that it comes from a coal pit or a bonfire properly attended. These conditions point to the need of forest fire lookout stations connected by telephone with the forest wardens and land owners. Accordingly, in 1911, a law was passed providing that whenever a number of adjoining towns should establish at their own expense such lookout stations, one-half of the expense of maintenance should be paid by the towns, and one-half by the State.

As the towns did not establish the stations as provided by this law, an act was passed in 1917, providing for the establishment of such stations by the commissioner of forestry. Two wooden towers have been built,—one, located on the top of Pine Hill in Exeter; the other, a less expensive tower, on Chopmist Hill in Scituate.

These towers are range-finding observation stations, so that with instrumental aid forest fires may be quickly located. Each station is provided with field glasses, a circular map table with alidade mounted at the

center, an orientated topographic map and protractor with numbered degrees. In case of distant fire where nothing can directly be seen except smoke rising beyond intervening hills and ridges, the two stations co-operate thus: The observer sights along his alidade and gets the line of the fire. He then telephones the observer on the other station to give him the numbered line of the fire from the second station. The first observer having thus obtained the lines from both stations, notes the point where the two lines cross—the location of the fire.

The following is a list of Rhode Island native forest trees:\*

Alternate-leaved Dogwood,	Hoary Alder,	Rock Maple,
American Beech,	Holly,	Sassafras,
Balm of Gilead,	Hornbeam,	Scarlet Haw,
Basswood,	Ironwood,	Scarlet Oak,
Bitternut Hickory,	Larch,	Shad Bush,
Black Ash,	Large-toothed Poplar,	Shagbark Hickory,
Black Birch,	Mockernut Hickory,	Sheepberry,
Black Cherry,	Mountain Ash,	Shining Willow,
Black Maple,	Mountain Maple,	Slippery Elm,
Black Oak,	Pear Thorn,	Smooth Alder,
Black Spruce,	Pignut Hickory,	Staghorn Sumac,
Black Willow,	Pin Oak,	Striped Maple,
Butternut,	Pitch Pine,	Swamp White Oak,
Canoe Birch,	Poison Sumac,	Sycamore,
Chestnut,	Post Oak,	Tulip Tree,
Chestnut Oak,	Quaking Aspen,	Tupelo,
Choke Cherry,	Red Ash,	White Ash,
Glaucous Willow,	Red Cedar,	White Cedar,
Gray Birch,	Red Cherry,	White Elm,
Green Ash,	Red Maple,	White Oak,
Hackberry,	Red Oak,	White Pine,
Hemlock,	River Birch,	Yellow Birch.

\* This list is probably incomplete. The term *naturalized*, instead of *native*, should perhaps be applied to a very few of these trees.



## CHAPTER IV

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THE INDIAN TRIBES OF RHODE ISLAND



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### THE INDIAN TRIBES.

THE INDIAN TRIBES OF RHODE ISLAND.—India and Indian are words of Eastern origin. Christopher Columbus brought them to the New World, on his first voyage, in 1492. Sighting the islands on our eastern coast, the great discoverer, believing he had come to the outer fringes of that eastland of marvelous beauty, fertility and wealth, called the lands India or Cathay, and the red men who inhabited them, Indians. This was the land of Milton's dream, "Where the gorgeous East, with richest hand, showers on her kings barbaric pearls and gold." It will be remembered that in his urgent appeal to Queen Isabella for moneys to equip his voyage to the West, Columbus urged its importance on the ground of finding a new route to the East Indies and an easier way of possessing its wealth, by discovery or conquest; the "lure of the wild" was across pathless seas rather than along wilderness trails.

The name Indian was strange to the savages—as strange as the people who thus saluted them, the winged ships in which they sailed and the Spanish tongue they spoke. The red men had known each other by ancestral and tribal names, but now they are ordained to carry a classic name, Indian,—a word older than the Roman Forum, older than the Parthenon at Athens, older than the pyramids at Thebes,—a name they had never heard before and whose meaning they did not know.

Concerning this new people Columbus wrote that they were no wild savages, no cruel barbarians. They had good faces, they carried no weapons, they were courteous, and generous. They were "very gentle, without knowing what evil is, without killing, without stealing." "Because," he said, "they showed much kindness for us, and because I knew that they would be more easily made Christian through love than fear, I gave to some of them some colored caps, and some strings of glass beads for their necks, and many other trifles, with which they were delighted, and were so entirely ours, that it was a marvel to see."

In his first letters to Isabella, Columbus tells her that he will be able to supply all the gold they need, also spices, cotton, mastic, aloes, rhubarb, cinnamon and slaves,—"Slaves, as many of these idolators as their Highness shall command to be shipped." Such was India and the Indians whom Columbus saw, while of the Spanish discoverers the red men cried aloud from house to house, "Come, come and see the people from Heaven!"

Concerning the ethnic origin of the savage tribes of North America, there is no clear knowledge, although a multitude of studies have been

made and opinions given currency. "We do not know," is the present attitude of the best scholars in Indian ethnology.

It is generally accepted that all the savage tribes of North America, with this exception of the Esquimaux and Alaskans on the north and the Cliff Dwellers of Arizona on the south, are of one race of men, whose distinguishing characteristics may be classified and defined. Concerning the red men, it may be said that they were a different order in comparison with their northern or southern neighbors. In language, religion, laws, government, dress, dwellings, towns, house furnishings, food, tools, implements of husbandry, arms, occupations, works of art, literature, etc., etc., they seem to belong to a race far inferior to the Cliff Dwellers of the South West or the Borean inhabitants of the North Temperate and Arctic Zone. For these and other reasons, chiefly physiological and cranial, anthropologists have been unable to trace their descent from any existing races, their individualities differentiate them from all other nations and tribes of our globe.

The Indian tribes were nomadic, and in tribal relations and local haunts as mutable as the sands of the sea. Parkman tells us that the Indian population, which in 1535 Cartier found on the banks of the St. Lawrence River, had disappeared at the opening of the next century, and another race had succeeded in language and customs widely different. At the same time, the Iroquois Nation in New York was rising to a ferocious vitality and fighting strength, which would have subjected, absorbed, or exterminated every other Indian tribe north of the line of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi, had not the presence of the New England and Canadian white colonies prevented. With no individual ownership in land, each family, community and tribe was constantly subject to change of residence. The wigwam and its furniture was not a fixture and its removal and erection was as easy as the task of a soldier on the march, pitching his tent for the night. As the usual occupations of the men were hunting, fishing and fighting, while the women, as serfs, attended to the raising of corn, beans, squashes, pumpkins, and tobacco, and to all menial service, it readily appears that change of residence was a matter of small concern, subject as it was to the varied and varying conditions of whim, convenience, comfort or necessity. Forty miles a day was an easy journey for an Indian family or caravan and the promise of better hunting ground or tillage, in a new quarter, was a sufficient incentive for the excursion. Nomadic family and community customs prevail in our own age, in the states of the great plains and Rockies. The main conditions of tribal or family permanency with any of the Indian tribes consisted either in fixed community dwellings and furnishings, as among the Iroquois and Hurons, or in business localities and holdings, as was the case of the Narragansetts, who made wampum for

the tribes of the interior from sea shells, or of tillage and food supplies of grain and fish as the Wampanoags and the Penacooks, in New Hampshire. Champlain reported large Indian wigwam villages and fields of maize along the New England coasts, 1603-07.

Subject and enslaved tribes were controlled as to their habitat and social conditions by the conquering tribe. The Iroquois often gave no quarter to captive tribes, condemning all to immediate death or to long continued savage cruelty, ending in death.

The Indian's instinct for fighting was a great cause of tribal disturbances. Their national and tribal wars usually ended in slavery or extermination. So completely was the Pequot tribe of Connecticut vanquished and blotted out in the war with the Narragansetts, assisted by the white colonists of New England, that it was declared a public offense even to mention the Pequot name.

The Indian language was rich and varied as related to common life and common things, but very deficient as to ideas and concepts, mental, moral or spiritual. They used very long words with many consonants, letters with gutteral sounds prevailing. Cotton Mather said some of the Indian words had been growing since the confusion of tongues at Babel. Chargogagog-man-chogagog-Char-lun-a-gun-ga-maug, Charbana-konkommon, Co-cum-scussuc, Can-caun-ja-wotchuck, Neutakonkanut, are specimens of Indian place names in New England, while Kickemuit, Narragansett, Woonasquatucket, Annawomscutt, Shawomet, Ponegansett, Chepachet are Rhode Island Indian place names. The total contribution of the Algonquin tribes to our American dictionary is about 200 words, including such words as Tammany, totem, mugwump, samp (Ind. Nawa-saump), succotash (Narra. Siekquatash) pow-wow.

Indian place names have a local meaning which gives them value for preservation. The meaning is carried in the name. *Sowams* is the south land; *Pokanoket*, cleared land; *Seckonk*, literally the mouth of a stream; *Kickeamuit*, at the great spring; *Nayatt*, at the point; *Touisset*, at or about the old fields; *Patucket*, the place of the great falls; *Massasoit*, the great sachem or king. Two New England States have Indian names: Massachusetts and Connecticut. In the State of Maine, hundreds of Indian place words are preserved in the naming of rivers, lakes, bays, headlands and mountains, thereby preserving the nomenclature of a race, whose monuments are few and fast disappearing.

A key to the Indian tongue of the New England tribes was published by Roger Williams in London in 1643, the result of his studies of the language of the tribes of Massachusetts, Wampanoags, and Narragansetts. It was styled a "Key into the Language of America," and while this vocabulary is limited to these tribes it undoubtedly had a wider relation. "God was pleased," he writes, "to give me a painful, patient spirit to lodge

with them in their filthy, smoky holes to gain their tongue." Mr. Williams' work was most praiseworthy in that an arduous study of the Narragansett tongue was made under such great bodily discomfort. In this connection it is of historic interest to note that Mr. Williams wrote "A Little Additional Discourse of the Name Heathan," treating of these New England natives "as also concerning that great point of their conversions." A copy of this tract is preserved in the British Museum. A single quotation from this tract sheds strong light on the acts of Mr. Williams as a volunteer apostle for the conversion of the Indians. It at the same time shows Mr. Williams' attitude to the Christian faith of New England and indeed of all Christendom. A single quotation speaks volumes. "For our New England parts, I can speak it confidently, I know it to have been easy for myself, long ere this, to have brought many thousands of these natives—yea the whole country—to a far greater anti-Christian conversion than ever was heard of in America. I could have brought the whole country to observe one day in seven: I add, to have received baptism; to have come to a stated church meeting; to have maintained priests, and forms of prayer, and a whole form of anti-Christian worship, in life and death. \* \* \* Woe be to me if I call that conversion to God which is indeed the subversion of the souls of millions in Christendom from one false worship to another." It is somewhat difficult to understand how the observance of the Sabbath, baptism, church attendance, priests, prayer, are anti-Christian and subversion of the souls of heathens or any others. These were precisely the things taught by John Eliot, Experience Mayhew and Jonathan Bourne in Massachusetts, and earlier by the devoted, self-sacrificing Jesuits in the great North West.

As to native religions or religious concepts, the Indians of the New England tribes had faint ideas and few religious practices. There was a native mental, as well as physical laziness and inertness which blinded all spiritual vision. In the ordinary ongoings of natural laws and in the usual employments in agriculture, hunting and fishing, in sports, in debauchery, or in war, the Indian saw little and thought less of any relationship other than human. In dreadful dangers and in the presence of hunger, thirst, cold, heat, physical torture and death itself, the Indian met all with a courage and a stoical indifference that have won the admiration of their persecutors, but there is no evidence of religious trust and resignation. At the more terrific exhibitions of nature, in storms, tempests, cyclones, volcanic eruptions, eclipses, comets, etc., the Indian mind was either overwhelmed with wonder by the majesty of the operation or stupified and cowed by an inherent shrinking from danger. No religious idea of a great First Cause, or a Causative and Protective Agency or Being occupied his thought, no place of worship or family shrine set up,

no form of worship known, no prayer offered. Edward Winslow wrote, "They are a people without any religion, or knowledge of any God." In preaching to them in the Indian language, Cotton, of Plymouth, was obliged to use the English word, God, for want of any sign of a Supreme Being known to his hearers, and John Eliot in his translation of the Bible into the Algonquin tongue resorted to the same expedient.

Pope's ideal Indian is a being

"Whose untutored mind  
Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind.  
His soul proud science never taught to stray,  
Far as the solar walk or Milky Way,  
But thinks admitted to that equal sky,  
His faithful dog shall keep him company."

A Maine historian, long conversant with the remnants of the Indian tribes, writes: "The fanciful historians have said much respecting the savage's hope of felicity in fine fields beyond the gates of death, where he should meet his ancestors and be happy in a state of immortality. But from any conversation had with the Indians here, or from anything which can be gathered from those who have been most with them, there is no reason to believe that the Northern savages ever had ideas of that nature."

Even Roger Williams, whose knowledge of the Narragansetts, for forty years, even to the minutest facts relative to their social, industrial, and religious characteristics, calls them "the dregs of mankind," and further says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes; and all the cords that ever bound the barbarous to foreigners were made to self and covetousness."

Sir John Lubbock has well said: "It is not too much to say that the horrible dread of unknown evil hangs like a thick cloud over savage life, and embitters every pleasure." Apply this comprehensive idea to the frightful war dances of our native tribes, to the terrible massacres of whole families of New England towns, to the pitiless tortures inflicted on women and children, to the noisy incantations of the pow-wows, or medicine men, to the neglect of their aged and infirm at the approach of death, to the noisy babel jargon of their funeral services, and to their burial customs, and we may clearly discern that these children of our forests were of the purest savage, degraded type, whose sad condition of heathenism awakens our sympathies, whose undeveloped elemental virtues command our respect, and whose courage in hours of danger and heroic manhood, when challenged to its best, calls for our praise.

Verrazzano, in 1524, in search of the Orient, explored the coast of Rhode Island in the ship "Dauphin," entered Narragansett Bay (Refugio), and lay at anchor in Newport harbor, for fifteen days, from the 6th of May. During this time he and his crew held familiar intercourse

with the natives whose homes bordered on the Bay, and the interesting account he gives is the first authentic story we have of the Indians occupying both shores of Narragansett Bay. The story, as told by the great discoverer, shows the qualities of a keen observer and a careful reporter of what he saw and heard on our shores. Even the style indicates an artist's use of language, in the spirit of a faithful recorder.

Verrazzano writes: "We proceeded to another place, fifteen leagues from the Island (Block Island) where we found a very excellent harbor (Refugio, Newport). Before entering it, we saw about twenty small boats filled with people, who came to the ship with various cries and wonderment. But they would not approach nearer than fifty paces. Stopping, they looked at the structure of the ships, our persons and dress. Afterward they all cried out loudly together, signifying that they were delighted. By imitating their signs we inspired them with a measure of confidence, so that they came near enough for us to toss them some little bells and glasses and many toys, which they took and looked at laughing, and then came aboard without fear. Among them were two kings, more attractive in form and stature, than can be described. One was about forty years old and the other about twenty-four, and they were dressed in the following fashion. The elder king had the skin of a deer wrapped around his nude body, artificially made with various embroideries to decorate it. His head was bare. His hair was bound behind with various bands, and around his neck he wore a large chain ornamented with many stones of different colors. The youngest king was like him in appearance. This was the fairest looking people and the handsomest in their costumes that we found in our voyage. They exceed us in size and are of a very fair complexion (*sono di colore bianchissimo*) ; some of them incline more to a white and others to a tawny color. Their faces are sharp; their hair is long and black, on the adornment of which they bestow great care. Their eyes are black and keen; their demeanor is gentle and attractive, very much like that of the ancients. I say nothing to your majesty of the body that are all in good proportion as belong to well formed men."

"The women resemble the men in size and are very graceful and handsome and quite attractive in dress and manners. They had no other clothing except a deer skin, ornamented as were the skins worn by the men. Some had very rich lynx skins upon their arms and wore varied ornaments upon their heads, braided in their hair, which hung down upon their breasts; others wore different ornaments, such as those of the women of Egypt and Syria. The older and the married people, both men and women, wore many ornaments in their ears, hanging down in oriental fashion.

"We saw on them pieces of wrought copper, which is more essential to them than gold, the latter being deemed the most ordinary of metals,

yellow being a color much disliked by them. Blue and red are the colors which they value most highly. Of the things which we gave them, they preferred the bells, azure crystal and other toys, which they hung in their ears and about their necks. They do not value or desire to have silk or gold drapery, or other kinds of cloth, nor implements of steel or iron. When we showed them our weapons, they expressed no admiration and only asked how they were made. The same indifference was manifested when they were given the looking glasses, which they with smiles returned to us as soon as they had looked at them. They are very generous, giving away what they have.

"We formed a great friendship with them and one day we entered into port with our ship, having before rode at the distance of a league from the shore, as the weather was unfavorable. They came to the ship with a number of their little boats, with their faces painted with different colors, manifesting real signs of joy, bringing us of their provisions, and signifying to us where we could best ride in safety with our ship and keeping with us until we cast anchor.

"We remained among them fifteen days to provide ourselves with many things of which we were in want, during which time they came every day to see our ship, bringing with them their wives, of whom they were very careful, for, although they came on board themselves and remained a long while, they made their wives stay in the boats, nor could we ever get them on board by any solicitations or any presents we could make them. One of the two kings, however, often came with his queen and many attendants to see us for his amusement. But he always stopped on land at the distance of two hundred paces from us and sent a boat to announce his intended visit, saying they would come and see our ship. This was done for safety and as soon as they received our answer they came and remained some time to look around. On hearing the annoying cries of the sailors, the king sent his queen with her attendants, in a very light boat, to wait near an island, a quarter of a league distant, while he remained a long time on board, talking with us by signs, and expressing his fanciful notions about everything in the ship and asking the use of all. After imitating our modes of salutation and tasting our food, he courteously took leave of us. Once, when our men remained two or three days on a small island near the ship for their various necessities, as sailors are wont to do, he came with seven or eight of his attendants to inquire about our movements, often asking us if we intended to remain there long, and offering us everything at his command. Sometimes he would shoot with his bow and run up and down with his people, making great sport for us. We often went five or six leagues into the interior and found the country as pleasant as can be conceived, adapted to cultivation of every kind, whether of corn, wine or oil. There are open plains

twenty-five and thirty leagues in length, entirely free from trees or other obstructions and so fertile that whatever is sown there will yield an excellent crop. On entering the woods we observed that they might all be traversed by any large army. The trees in them were oaks, cypresses and others unknown in Europe. We found also apples, plums, filberts and many other fruits, but of a different kind from ours. The animals, which are in great numbers, stags, deer, lynx, and many other kinds, are taken with snares and by bows. The latter is the principal weapon of the natives. Their arrows are beautifully made; for points they use emery, jasper, hard marble and other sharp stones instead of iron. They also use the same kind of sharp stones in cutting down trees and with them construct their boats of single logs, hollowed out with admirable skill and sufficiently commodious to seat ten or twelve persons. Their oars are short, with broad blades, and are rowed with the force of the arms, with the greatest care and as rapidly as they wish.

"We saw their dwellings, which are circular in form, about ten or twelve paces in circumference, made of logs split in half, without any regularity of architecture, and covered with roofs of straw, nicely put on, which protected them from wind and rain.

"The father and the whole family dwell together in one house. In some of their houses we saw twenty-five or thirty persons. Their food is pulse, as that of the other people, which is here better than elsewhere, and more carefully cultivated. In the time of sowing they are governed by the moon, which they think affects the sprouting of the grain. They have many other ancient customs. They live by hunting and fishing, and they are long-lived. If they fall sick, they cure themselves without medicine, with the heat of the fire. Death comes from extreme old age.  
\* \* \* When they die, their relatives mutually join in weeping, mingled with singing, for a long while."

The first settlers of Rhode Island came into close business and life relations with two great tribes of the Algonquin stock—the Wampanoags or Pokanokets on the east shore of Narragansett Bay, and the Narragansetts on the west, occupying the chief islands of the Bay, and the mainland from the Bay to the Pawcatuck River. Each of these two tribes were subjects of a great sachem and sagamore sub-chiefs. Massasoit was the chief of the Wampanoags, and aged Canonicus of the Narragansetts, with his nephew, Miantonomi as sagamore or assistant. Each of the great tribes was made up of small tribes under sagamores. The Niantics on the Pawcatuck, under Ninigret, the Pawtuxets in Warwick, under Pocumtuck and Soconoco, and the Nipmucs in the northwestern part of Rhode Island were subject tribes of the Narragansetts. Prior to the Pilgrim settlement at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620, some fatal epidemic had swept over the Wampanoag country and had so weakened the once great

and independent tribe that it had become a vassal of the Narragansetts, after a fierce battle on the Island of Aquidneck, when the tribe as well as the island fell under the sway of the western tribe across the bay. So powerful were the Narragansetts in 1620, that they held a masterly control over the tribes of Eastern Massachusetts as far north as the Merrimac River and the Nipmucs of the Pawtucket Valley on the north. Frequent contests took place with the Pequots and Mohegans of the Thames and Connecticut River valleys, but these tribes were good fighters and never came into slavery to their powerful Narragansett neighbors.

Gookin says that at one time the Narragansetts could muster five thousand warriors for battle, and it is quite probable that the Wanapanoags in the days of their prosperity were of equal military strength. It is estimated that Canonicus held sway over 25,000 red men of his own and subject tribes at the time of the Plymouth settlement and that 10,000 of that number, under Massasoit, transferred their allegiance to the Plymouth colonists and the English king, at Plymouth, in March, 1621. As Vermont had no Indian tribes and New Hampshire only one, the Penncooks, a small tribe on the coast, it may be safely stated that, at the opening of the Seventeenth Century the numbers of coast Indians in New England, including those on Long Island, did not exceed 50,000.

Verrazzano tells us that the Narragansetts were superior in size, physique, dress and general appearance to all other savage tribes that he saw on his voyage. The mere fact of their control of the tribes of Eastern and Northern New England confirms all that has been written concerning them by all the early navigators and later historians. Tribal supremacy in the main rested on fighting ability. Warriors made and preserved tribal control. Strategy and savage cunning took the place of diplomacy. Gov. Bradford tells of the trick of the Narragansetts to awe the Plymouth settlers. He writes: "Sone after this ship's deperture, ye great people of ye Narigansets, in a braving manner, sente a messenger unto them with a bundl of arrows tyed aboue with a great sneak-skine; which their interpreter tould them was a threatening & a chaleng. Upon which ye Govr. with ye advice of others, sente then a round answer, that if they had rather have warre than peace, they might beginne when they would; they had done them no wrong, neither did they fear them, or should they find them unprovided. And by another messenger sente ye sneak-skine back with bulits in it; but they would not receive it, but sent it back again. \* \* \* Ye reason was their owne ambition, who (since ye death of so many of ye Indians) thought to dominire & lord it over ye rest & conceived ye English would be a barr in their way, and saw that Massasoyt took sheilter all ready under their wings."

The superiority of the Narragansetts appears in two lucrative industries which contributed to their wealth, power and long control in New

England. They were skilled in making stone basins, kettles, pipes and other vessels which were cut from a soapstone quarry, near Neutacokanlut Hill, within the present limits of Providence. They also made bracelets and other Indian ornaments and it is believed they wrought in some metals.

The Narragansetts were the principal coiners of wampum for the Algonquin tribes. This was the current coin in business exchange among the Indians as gold, silver and copper are with civilized peoples. Wampum was also used, when strung as beads for personal adornment. There were two kinds, white and black, made of the Quahog and Periwinkle shells. Mr. Williams in his key to Amer. Lang., XXIV, thus describes the shell coin: "The Indians are ignorant of Europe's coyne; yet they have given a name to ours, and call it *moncash*, from the English *money*. Their owne is of two sorts: One white, which they call *Metcuhock*, made of the stem or stocke of the *Periwinkle*, which they call *Metcuhock*, when all the shell is broken off; and of this sort six of their small beads (which they make with holes to string the bracelets) are currant with the English for a penny. The second is black, inclining to blew, which is made of the shell of a fish, which some English call *Hens*, *Poquahock* (Quahog) and of this sort three make a penny."

Peag was the name of the substance used, both white and black. The black peag was the small round spot in the inside of the Quahog shell. The white peag was the twisted end of small shells, broken from the main part. When strung, these parts of shells were worn as necklaces, girdles and bracelets and wrought into belts of curious workmanship. They thus possessed an intrinsic value with the natives, for the purposes of ornament, and were readily taken by them in exchange for their furs. The regalia of the sachems was made of these beads, the different colors being blended and wrought in curious figures. The Indians on the seashore made the wampum, no license being required from the chief. They also made the ornaments, their trade in peag and ornaments extending into the interior for six hundred miles. The Indians were shrewd in trade and would travel many miles to secure good prices for bows, arrows, dishes, necklaces and other ornaments. With their wampum they eagerly purchased European trinkets, knives, mirrors, tools and fire arms, although the Colonial laws forbade the sale of guns, powder and shot to the natives. Flattery of the whites was a means of profit, and beggars soon came to be common. Laws were enacted against trading with Indians, as debts contracted were not usually paid. So fond were they of spirituous liquors that prohibitory laws were made against their sale.

Punctuality was a marked trait with the Indian. His promises were fulfilled with great exactness, justice was a cardinal virtue. Punishment

for crime was meted out with promptness and completeness. The verdict of public opinion, when once obtained, controlled the sachem and the tribe.

Arnold tells us that their love of news amounted to a passion. The bearer of some stirring news was a welcome visitor to the council fire or the wigwam. On such occasions the listeners would encircle the story teller, while in profound silence the news was told or a consultation held. Eloquence was a native gift, the orator often speaking for an hour or more with impassioned language and gesture. An audience to hear news of great import to a tribe was gained by sending swift runners to rouse the country. A new runner, on hearing the call, would start at once for the next town, until the last, nearing the sachem's wigwam, shouted loud and long, proclaiming the meeting and calling all to assemble at the Council. Owing to training from infancy, and the anointing their limbs from infancy, the runner's speed was great, making from eighty to one hundred miles in a day.

Indian corn was their staple food, and was boiled or parched or eaten raw. A spoonful of parched corn, when ground or powdered fine in the mortar, would make a full meal. Corn meal, when boiled was called Nawsaump, English Samp, which is Indian corn beaten and boiled. We call it hasty pudding or mush. Dried chestnuts were a luxury. Acorns were used as food. Oil from walnuts was used in cooking and for ointment. Strawberries abounded and made a delicious food, when mixed with corn meal. Berries of all sorts were dried and used the year round. Squashes, askuteosquash, and beans, were much used. Venison and other meats were dried and smoked for winter use, as were cod fish, clams, quahogs, scallops and oysters were the chief food products for the coast Indians. These shell fish were very large, very nutritious, and health-giving. Whales when captured or cast upon the shores were to them a very palatable food.

Of the social, moral and religious life of the Rhode Island tribes, we have various and conflicting opinions. As already quoted, Mr. Williams does not give us an exalted idea of Indian life and thought, Verrazzano saw no evidence of a thought or belief in a future life. Gov. Arnold says: "Here we find the doctrine of the immortality of the soul entertained by a barbarous race, who affirmed that they received it from their ancestors. They were ignorant of revelation; yet here was Plato's great problem solved in the American wilderness, and believed by all the aborigines of the West." But Dr. Palfrey, writing at the same time, says: "The New England savage was not the person to have discovered what the vast reaching thought of Plato and Cicero could not attain."

Goodwin says: "Their religion was gross superstition and consisted largely in slavish submission to their *powahs* or priests. They worshipped

many gods, of whom the chief was *Kichtan*, the original creator and dispenser of good here and hereafter." Arnold tells us of "their great God, *Cowtantowit*, who lived in the Southwest, the region of balmy airs. From him came their grains and fruits and to his home sped the souls of their virtuous dead to enjoy an eternity of sensual bliss." Of lesser deities, Mr. Williams obtained the names of thirty-seven, to all of which they prayed in their services and worship.

Verrazzano wrote in 1524: "As to the religious faith of all these tribes (in New England), not understanding their language we could not learn by signs or gestures, anything certain. It seemed to us that they had no religion, nor any knowledge of a First Cause, or Mover—that they worshipped neither the heavens, stars, sun or moon nor the planets. \* \* \* Our conclusion was that they had no religion but lived without any."

While it is impossible to reconcile these conflicting opinions, we may accept the poet Longfellow's interpretation of the Indian faith in his address to those:

"Who have faith in God and Nature,  
Who believe that in all ages  
Every human heart is human;  
That even in savage bosoms  
There are gropings, yearnings, strivings,  
For the good they comprehend not;  
That the feeble hands and helpless,  
Groping blindly in the darkness,  
Touch God's right hand in that darkness,  
And are lifted up and strengthened."

Perhaps the most valuable contribution from the pen of Roger Williams was "A Key Into the Language of America," containing a large number of Indian words, of the Narragansetts and other tribes with whom he had business or friendly relations, and from whom he obtained much first-hand information as to their character, manners and customs, opinions and beliefs, while much of his writings is unintelligible to the modern mind and can have no value except as museum curios, the "Key" has a permanent value in its account of matters relating to the Indians, which he saw, heard and experienced, the author believes he is doing a double service to the reader by quoting liberally from Mr. Williams' own pen the results of his studies and observations. While Trumbull has shown the faults and inaccuracies of Mr. Williams' key-words, no one can reasonably doubt the general accuracy of his notes, put in print as soon as made, after his contact with the natives. It is greatly to his credit that he won and held the confidence of the chiefs of the Narragansetts and Wampanoags, and that he literally ate, drank, toiled and slept with them, in the earnestness of his desire "to do the natives good," in answer to his prayer: "If the Lord please to grant my desires that I may intend

what I long after, the natives' souls." One thing is certain, the language of the Rhode Island Indians, rude, narrow, hard, gutteral, as it was, is as dead as the people who spoke it, but the lives they lived, the beliefs they held, the business they transacted, the social relations they maintained, the wars they engaged in, their deaths, burials, and extermination, will be the treasures of the historian for all time. Mr. Williams says:

Their names are of two sorts: First, those of the English giving, as *Natives*, *Salvages*, *Indians*, *Wild-Men* (so the Dutch call them *Wilden*) *Abergeny* (aborigines), *Men*, *Pagans*, *Barbarians*, *Heathen*.

Secondly, their names which they give themselves. \* \* \* First, general, belonging to all *Natives*, as *Ninnuock*, *Minnimissinnuwoock*, *Eniskeetompauwog*, which signifies *Men*, *Folk* or *People*. \* \* \* Secondly, particular names, peculiar to severall *nations*, of them amongst *themselves*, as *Nanhigganueck*, *Massachuseueck*, *Cawasumscuck*, *Cowwesueck*, *Quintikooock*, *Quinnipicuok*, *Pequittog*, etc.

From *Adam* and *Noah* that they spring, it is granted on all hands. But for their later *Descent*, and whence they came into those part, it seemed as hard to finde, as to finde the *Well-head* of some fresh streme, which running many miles out of the *country* to the salt *Ocean*, hath met with many mixing *streams* by the way. They say themselves, that they have *sprung* and *grown* up in that very place, like the very trees of the *wilderness*. They say that their *great God* *Cavtantowwit* created those parts. \* \* \* They have no *Clothes*, *Bookes*, nor *Letters*, and conceive their *Fathers* never had; and therefore they are easily persuaded that the *God* that made *English* men is a greater *God*, because He hath so richly endowed the *English* above *themselves*. But when they heare that about sixteen hundred yeeres agoe, *England* and the *inhabitants* thereof were like unto *themselves*, and since have received from *God*, *Clothes*, *Books*, &c., they are greatly affected with a secret hope concerning *themselves*. \* \* \*

Others (and myself) have conceived some of their words to hold affinity to the Hebrews.

Secondly, they constantly annoint their heads as the Jewes did.

Thirdly, they give *Dowries* for their wives, as the Jewes did.

Fourthly, \* \* \* they constantly separate their women (during the time of their monthly sickness) in a little house alone by themselves foure or five dayes, and hold it an *irreligious thing* for either *Father* or *Husband* or any *Male* to come near them.

\* \* \* As the *Greekes* and other *Nations*, and ourselves call the *Seven Starres* (or *Charles Waine the Beare*) so doe they *Mosk* or *Paukunawate* the Beare.

They have many strange Relations of one *Wetucks*, a man that wrought great *Miracles* amongst them, and walking upon the waters, &c., with some kind of broken Resemblance to the *Sonne of God*.

Lastly, it is famous that the *Souwest* (*Sowanii*) is the great subject of their discourse. From them their *traditions*. There they say (at the *South West*) is the Court of their *great God* *Cantantouwit*: at the *South West* are their *Forcfathers* soules; to the *South West* they goe

themselves when they dye; from the South West came their *Corne* and *Beanes* out of their *great God Cautantowwits* field; and indeed the further *Northward* and *Westward* from us their *Corne* will not grow, but to the *Southward* better and better. I dare not conjecture in these *uncertainties*, I believe they are *lost* and yet hope (in the Lord's holy season) some of the wildest of them shall be found to share in the blood of the Son of God. \* \* \*

The natives are of two sorts (as the English are). Some more rude and clownish, who are not so apt to Salute, but upon *Salutation* re-salute lovingly. Others, and the generall, are *sober* and *grave*, and yet chearful in a meane, and as ready to begin a salutation as to re-salute, which yet the English generally begin, out of desire to civilize them.

*What Cheare Netop*, is the generall salutation of all English towards them. *Netop* is friend. They are exceedingly delighted with Salutations in their own language. *Cowaunkamish*, my service to you, is a special word of salutation.

In the Narragansett Country (which is the chief people in the land), a man shall come to many Townes, some bigger, some lesser, it may be a dozen in 20 miles travel.

As commonly a single person has no house, so after the death of a husband or wife, they often break up house, and live here and there awhile with friends, to allay their excessive sorrows.

Obscure and mean persons have no names. \* \* \* Again, because they abhor to name the dead (death being the king of terrors to all natural men, and although the natives hold the soul to live forever, yet not holding a Resurrection, they die and mourn without hope). In that respect I say if any of their Sachems or neighbours die who were of their names (family) they lay down those names as dead. \* \* \* They are remarkably free and courteous to invite all strangers in and if any came to them upon any occasion (business) they request them to *come in* if they come not in themselves.

I have acknowledged amongst them an heart sensible of kindnesses and have reaped kindness again from many, seven years after, which I myself had forgotten. \* \* \* There is a favor of civility and courtesy even amongst these wild Americans, both amongst themselves and towards strangers.

Of eating and entertainments, parched meal (Nokelick) is a ready and very wholesome food, which they eat with a little water, hot or cold. I have travelled with near 200 Indians 100 miles through the woods, every man carrying a little basket of this (Nokehieck) at his back, and sometimes in a hollow leather girdle about his middle sufficient for a man three or four days. With this ready provision (food) and their bow and arrows are they ready for war and travel at an hour's warning. With a spoonful of this meal and a spoonful of water from the brook, have I made many a good dinner and supper.

*Nasaump* is a kind of meal pottage, unparched. From this the English call their Samp, which is the Indian corn, beaten and boiled and eaten hot or cold with milk or butter, which are mercies beyond the native's plain water and which is a dish exceeding wholesome for the English bodies

The *tree-eaters* are a people so called (living between three and four hundred miles west into the land) from their eating only \* \* \* trees. They are men-eaters, they set no corn, but live on the bark of chestnut, walnut and other fine trees. They dry and eat this bark with the fat of beasts and sometimes of men. The people are the terror of the neighbor natives and yet these rebels the Son of God may subdue.

They generally all take tobacco and it is commonly the only plant which men labor in, though women managing all the rest. They say they take tobacco for two causes, first, against the rheum which causes the toothache, which they are impatient of, and secondly, to revive and refresh them, they drinking nothing but water.

Whoever comes in while they are eating, they offer them to eat that which they have, though but little enough prepared for themselves. It is a strange truth that a man shall generally find more free entertainment amongst these barbarians than among thousands that call themselves Christians. \* \* \* Howling and shouting is their alarm, they having no drums or trumpets; but whether an enemy approaches or fire break out this alarm passes from house to house. \* \* \*

They lay wood on the fire plentifully when they lie down to sleep winter and summer \* \* \* their fire is instead of our bed clothes. And so themselves and any that have occasion to lodge with them, must be content to turn often to the fire, if the night be cold, and they who first awake must repair the fires.

When they have a bad dream which they conceive to be a threatening from God, they fall to prayer, at all times of the night, especially early before day.

I once travelled to an Island of the wildest in our parts, where in the night an Indian had a vision or dream of the Sun darting a Beam into his Breast which he conceived to be the Messenger of his Death. This poor native called his friends and neighbors, and prepared some little refreshing for them, but himself was kept waking and fasting in great humiliations and invocations for 10 days and nights. \* \* \*

Nature and custom give sound sleep to these Americans on the Earth, on a board or mat.

Having no letters nor arts, 'tis admirable how quick they are in casting up great numbers, with the help of grains of corn, instead of Europe's pens and counters.

They hold the band of brotherhood so dear, that when one had committed a murder and fled, they executed his brother; it is common for a brother to pay the debt of a deceased brother.

Their virgins are distinguished by a bashful falling down of their hair over their eyes.

There are no beggars amongst them, nor fatherless children unprovided for. Their affections, especially to their children, are very strong, so that I have known a father take so grievously the loss of his child that he hath cut and stabbed himself with grief and rage. This extreme affection, together with want of learning, makes their children saucy, bold, and undutiful. \* \* \*

For their houses, the men commonly get and fix long poles which the women cover with mats and line them with embroidered mats which

the women make and call them *Munnotaubana* or hanging, which amongst them make as fair a show as hangings with us. Home is a solemn word amongst them, and no man will offer any hindrance to him, who after some absence is going to visit his family.

Two families will live comfortably and lovingly in a little round house of some fourteen or sixteen feet over, and some more families in proportion.

They point with the hand to the sun, by whose height they keep account of the day, and by the moon and stars by night, as we do by clocks and dials.

They are as full of business and as impatient of hindrance as any merchant in Europe.

Commonly they never shut their doors, day nor night, and 'tis rare that any hurt is done.

Instead of shelves they have several baskets wherein they put all their household stuff; they have some great bags or sacks made of hemp, which will hold five or six bushels.

Their women constantly beat all their corn with hand; they plant it, dress it, gather it, barn it, beat it, and take as much pains as any people in the world, which labor is questionless one cause of the extraordinary ease of childbirth.

*Note.*—"Wherein they exceed our English husbandmen" (says Wood), "keeping it so clean with their clamme shell hoes, as if it were a garden rather than a cornfield, not suffering a choaking weede to advance his audacious head above their infant corn, or an undermining worme to spoile his spurnes."

It is almost incredible what burdens the poor women carry of corn, of fish, of beans, of mats and a child beside.

\* \* \* \* \*

They nurse all their children themselves; yet if she be an high or rich woman, she maintains a nurse to tend the child.

\* \* \* \* \*

They have also amongst them natural fools, either so born, or accidentally deprived of reason. Many of them naturally Princes, or else industrious persons, are rich, and the poor among them will say they want nothing.

Bewailing is very solemn among them morning and evening, and sometimes in the night they bewail their lost husbands, wives, children, brothers or sisters. Sometimes a quarter, half, yea, a whole year, and longer, if it be for a great Prince.

Some men do not use tobacco, but they are rare birds; for generally all the men throughout the country have a tobacco-bag, with a pipe in it, hanging at their back; sometimes they make such great pipes of wood and stone, that they are two feet long, with men or beasts carved so big or massive, that a man maybe hurt mortally by one of them. \* \* \* They have an excellent art to cast our pewter and brass into very neat and artificial pipes. \* \* \* I never saw any take so excessively as I have seen men in Europe; and yet excess were more tolerable in them, because they want the refreshing beer and wine which God hath vouchsafed Europe.

\* \* \* From thick warm valleys where they winter, they remove a little nearer to their summer fields; when it is warm spring, they remove to their fields, where they plant corn. \* \* \* Sometimes, having fields a mile or two, or many miles apart, when the work in one field is over, they move their house to the other. If death fall in amongst them, they presently remove to a fresh place. If an enemy approach, they remove into a thicket or swamp, unless they have some fort to move into. \* \* \* Their great remove is from their summer fields to warm and thick wooded bottoms for the winter. They are quick, in half a day, yes, sometimes a few hours' warning, to be gone and the house up elsewhere, especially if they have stakes ready pitched for their mats. \* \* \* The men make the poles or stakes, but the women make and set up, take down, order and carry the mats and household stuff.

The sociableness of the nature of man appears in the wildest of them, who love society: families, co-habitation, and consociation of houses and towns together. \* \* \*

And as it is their husband's occasion these poor tectonists are often troubled like snails, to carry their houses on their backs, sometimes to fishing places, other times to hunting places, after that to a planting place, where it abides the longest (Woods).

Their desire of and delight in news is great as in the Athenians, and all men, more or less. A stranger that can relate news in their own language, they will call *Manitoo*, a God. Their manner is upon any tidings to sit 'round, double or treble, or more as their numbers be. I have seen near a thousand in a round (circle) where English could not well near half so many have sat. Every man has his pipe of their tobacco, and a deep silence they make and attention they give to the speaker. Many of them will deliver themselves either in a relation of news, or in a consultation, with very emphatic and great action, commonly an hour, and sometimes two hours together.

Canounicus, the old high sachem of the Narragansett Bay (a wise and peaceable Prince) once in a solemn oration to me, in a solemn assembly, using the Indian word *Wunnaumwayean* (if he say true) said, "I have never suffered any wrong to be offered to the English since they landed, nor never will. If the Englishman speaks true, if he means true, then shall I go to my grave in peace, and hope that the English and my posterity shall live in love and peace together."

I replied that he had no cause (as I hoped) to question the English-men's faithfulness, he having had long experience of their friendliness and trustiness. He took a stick and broke into ten pieces and related ten instances (laying down a stick for every instance) which gave him cause thus to fear and speak. I satisfied him in some matters and presented the rest to the English Governors, who, I hope, will be far from giving just cause to have barbarians question their faithfulness.

They have thirteen months in a year, according to the several moons. Winter is *Paponec*, Spring is *Sequan*, Summer is *Quaqusquam*, Autumn is *Taquonck*. If the season is dry, they have great and solemn meetings from all parts at one high place, to supplicate their gods and to beg rain and they will continue in this worship ten days, a fortnight,—yes three weeks, until rain comes.

It is admirable to see what paths their naked feet have made in the wilderness, in most stony and rocky places. They are generally quick on foot, brought up from the breasts to running; their legs being also from the womb stretched and bound up in a strange way on their cradle backward and also annointed; yet have they some that excel; so that I have known many of them run between four score or a hundred miles in a summer's day and back within two days. They also practice running races, and commonly, in the Summer they delight to go without shoes, although they have them hanging at their backs.

The thick woods and swamps (like the bogs to the Irish) are the places of refuge for women and children in war, while the men fight. As the country is wondrous full of brooks and rivers, so it also abounds in fresh ponds, some of many miles' compass. They are joyful in meeting anyone in traveling and will strike fires either with stones or sticks, to take tobacco and talk together. \* \* \* I once traveled with near 200, who had word of about 700 enemies in the way, yet they all resolved that it was a shame for an Indian to be afraid and turn back.

The Indians have an art of drying chestnuts and so to preserve them in their barns for a dainty all the year. They also dry acorns and in case of want of corn, by much boiling they make a good dish of them; sometimes, when corn is plenty, they eat acorns for a novelty. Of walnuts they make an excellent oil, good for many uses, but especially for anointing their heads. Of the chips of the walnut tree some English in the country make excellent beer both for taste, strength and color, and is used in offensive opening operations.

The strawberry is the wonder of all the fruits growing naturally in these parts. It is of itself excellent, so that one of the chiefest doctors of England was wont to say that God could have made, but God never did make a better berry. In some parts where the natives have planted, I have many times seen as many as would fill a good ship, within a few miles' compass. The Indians bruise them in a mortar, mix them with meal and make strawberry bread. \* \* \* The English make good wine of grapes and strawberries. \* \* \* Of white corn, the natives have a tradition that a crow brought them at first an Indian grain of corn in one ear and an Indian or French bean in another from the great God Kautantouwits field in the Southwest, from whence they hold came all their corn and beans. The women set or plant, weed and hill, gather and barn all the corn and fruits of the field. \* \* \* When a field is to be broken up, they have a very loving, sociable, speedy way to dispatch it. All the neighbors, men and women, forty, fifty, a hundred, join and come in to help freely. With friendly joining they break up their fields, hunt the woods, stop and kill fish in the rivers, it being true with them as in all the world in the affairs of earth and Heaven: By concord little things grow great; by discord the greatest come to nothing. \* \* \*

The Indian women use their natural hoes of shells and wood. The woman of a family will commonly raise two or three heaps of corn,—twelve, fifteen or twenty bushels in each heap, which they dry in round, broad heaps, \* \* \* covering it with mats at night and opening when the sun is hot.

*Wechekum*, the great "producer" was the sea or ocean. *Paumpca-gussit* was the *Sea-God* or Deity which they conceived in the sea. *Mishoon* was an Indian boat or canoe made of a pine, oak or chestnut tree. I have seen a native go into the woods, with his hatchet, carrying only a basket of corn with him and stones to strike fire. When he had felled his tree (a chestnut) he made him a little house or shed of the bark, puts fire and follows the burning of it with fire, in the middle in many places. His corn he boils and hath the brook nearby, and sometimes angles for fishes; but so he continues burning and hewing until he has within ten or twelve days (lying there at his work alone) finished, and (getting hands) launched his boat, with which afterward he ventures out to fish in the ocean.

Some of them (boats) will not well carry above three or four, but some of them twenty, thirty or forty men. Their own reason has taught them to pull off a coat or two and set it up on a small pole, with which they will sail before a wind ten or twenty miles. It is wonderful to see how they will venture in their canoes and how (being often upset as I have myself been with them) they will swim a mile, yea, two or more, safe to land. \* \* \* When sometimes in great danger I have questioned safety. They have said to me, "Fear not, if we be overset, I will carry you safe to land."

I have known thirty or forty of their canoes filled with men, and near as many more of their enemies in a sea fight. \* \* \*

They have a two-fold nakedness. First, ordinary and constant, when although they have a beast's skin or an English mantle on, yet that covers ordinarily but their hinder parts and all the foreparts from top to toe (except their secret parts, covered with a little apron, after the pattern of their and our first parents), I say all else open and naked.

Their male children go stark naked, and have no apron until they come to ten or twelve years of age; their female children, they, in a modest blush, cover with a little apron of an hand breadth, from birth.

Their second nakedness is when their men often abroad and both men and women within doors, leave off their beast's skins or English clothing and so (excepting their little apron) are wholly naked; yet but few of the women but will keep their skin or clothing (though loose) or near to them ready to gather it up about them. Custom has used their minds and bodies to it and in such a freedom from any wantonness that I have never seen that wantonness amongst them, as with grief I have heard of in Europe. They make curiously a coat or mantle of the fairest feathers of their turkies, which commonly their old men make and is with them as velvet is with us. Shoes and stockings they make of their deer skin worn out, which yet being excellently tanned by them, is excellent for to travel in wet and snow, for it is so tempered with oil that the water wrings out. Their tobacco bag hangs to their necks or sticks at their girdles. \* \* \* While they are among the English they keep on the English apparel. \* \* \*

The Indians have many Gods; they have given me the names of thirty-seven, which I have, all of which in their solemn worships they invocate; as *Kautantowit*, the great *South-West God*, to whose house all souls go and from whom came their corn and beans. \* \* \* They

conceive that there are many Gods or divine powers in the body of a man,—in his pulse, his heart, his lungs. \* \* \* They have a modest religious persuasion not to disturb any man in their conscience or worship. \* \* \* They believe that the souls of men and women go to the Southwest; their great and good men and women to Kautantouwits house, where they have hopes as the Turks of carnal joys. Murderers, thieves and liars souls wander restless abroad. \* \* \* They have it from their fathers that Kautantowit made one man and one woman of a stone, which, disliking, he broke them in pieces and made another man and woman of a tree, which were the fountains of all mankind.

A Connecticut Indian who had heard our discourse told the sachem, Miantunnomu that souls went up to Heaven or down to Hell; "For," said he, "our fathers told us that our souls go to the Southwest."

The Sachem answered, "But how do you know yourself that your souls go to the Southwest? Did you ever see a soul go thither?"

The native replied, "When did he (naming myself) see a soul go to Heaven or Hell?"

The Sachem again replied: "He has books and writings and one which God himself made concerning men's souls and therefore may well know more than we." \* \* \*

Their government is monarchical, yet at present the chiefest government is divided between a young sachem, Miantunnomu, and an elder sachem, Caunonicus, of about four-score years old, the younger man's uncle, and their agreement in the government is remarkable. The old sachem will not be offended at what the young sachem doth, and the young sachem will not do what he conceives will displease his uncle.

*Sachimmtacommock*, a prince's house, is far different from the other houses, both in capacity or receipt, and also the fineness and quality of their mats. \* \* \*

The sachems, although they have an absolute monarchy over the people, will not conclude of ought that concerns all, either laws or subsidies or wars, unto which the people are averse, and by gentle persuasion cannot be brought.

I could never discern that excess of scandalous sins among them which Europe aboundeth in. Drunkenness and gluttony, generally they know not what sins they be. \* \* \* A man will never hear of such crimes amongst them of robberies, murders, adulteries, etc., as among the English. The most usual custom amongst them in executing punishments is for the sachem either to beat or whip or put to death with his own hand, to which the common sort most quietly submit, though sometimes the sachem sends a secret executioner, one of his chief warriors, to fetch off a head, by some unexpected blow of a hatchet, when they have feared mutiny by public execution. \* \* \*

The number of wives is not stinted, yet the chief nation in the country, the Narragansets, the men have but one wife. Two causes they generally allege for their many wives. First, desire of riches, because the women bring in all the increase of the field,—the men only fish and hunt. Secondly, their long sequestering themselves from their wives after conception, until the child is weaned, which with some is long after a year old. \* \* \* They commonly abound with children and increase

mightily. \* \* \* I have often known in one-quarter of an hour a woman merry in the house, and delivered and merry again and within two days abroad and after four or five days at work.

Their coin is of two sorts,—one white, which they make of the stem or stock of the periwinkle \* \* \* when all the shell is broken off. Of this sort, six of the small beads are current with the English for a penny.

The second, is black, inclining to blue, which is made of the shell of a fish which some English call *Hens, Poquahock*, and of this sort three make an English penny. They that live upon the seaside generally make of it and as many make as will. \* \* \*

In addition to an account of the manners and traditions of the Indians Mr. Williams has left us in "The Key" nearly two thousand words and phrases which he recorded as in current use among the tribes that he had dealings with. Wamptun, sachem, squaw, sump, papoose, hawk, tantog are Anglicized Indian words.

Although the Indian tribes occupied the lands of the Western Continent at the time of the first European discoveries, their titles to their lands were not recognized as legal tenure. The sovereigns who sent out expeditions of discovery laid claim to all the lands on which their flag was planted by the discoverer, the Europeans were agreed in holding that the whole earth belonged to the followers of Christ, and that non-Christians had no rights to the soil or their own bodies. They believed and acted on the belief that savages had no rights of property or person; hence their property might be taken or destroyed and the people reduced to slavery, on Christian principles. In consequence, John Cabot's discovery of the American coast gave the English sovereign, as was claimed, the right to own and occupy the lands in the possession of our Indian tribes in and about Rhode Island. To the religiously devout of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries any treatment accorded black men or red men might be assumed "For the glory of God." All early grants and patents for Colonial reservations made no reference to Indian land titles, entirely ignoring their occupation and ownership. This remarkable assumption of territorial ownership, based on discovery of an hitherto unknown country was wholly unjust, and had it not been modified by the subsequent acts of the settlers, by real purchases of the natives, even for childish considerations, much trouble must have ensued. Many of the tribes were migratory, claiming no attachment to any special territory for a succession of years, while others dwelt for long periods on lands, which their industry had cleared, on which they had built comfortable houses and from which they raised Indian corn, squashes, beans, tobacco and other crops. The Narragansetts and the Wampanoags, of the Narra-

gansett Basin, belonged to the latter class, and justly claimed by right of long occupation and use, the lands on which they lived and over which they hunted. Canonicus had as full right to his preserve for game, and better, than many a landed lord of England or Germany; their rights in lands were as real as their rights in clothing and shelter. But these rights were communal, not individual. There is no evidence that any one Indian laid claim to any piece of land as its exclusive owner, while his right of occupancy and use was a matter of adjustment in the tribal allotments. It is probable that the tribes, in their dealings with the whites as to lands, held the same idea of white ownership, that it was communal and not individual, and still more, it may be assumed that in the gifts or sales of lands to the colonial settlers, they believed that they still held the right to roam and hunt at will, over the territory so transferred, without committing trespass.

How much the misunderstanding between the settlers and the natives had to do in originating the conflicts and wars which devastated the early New England and Canadian settlements we shall never know. Certain it is that in the settlement of the Colony of Pennsylvania, a series of conferences was held between William Penn, the founder, and the Delaware and other Indian tribes, and a treaty signed, of peace and friendship, which, says Voltaire, was the only treaty "never sworn to and never broken." In the later history of our State and general government, the rights of the tribes to tribal lands has been conceded and whenever a tribe has been willing to make a domicile, lands have been allotted on the grounds of certain undefinable aboriginal rights, thereby establishing the just principle of Indian land ownership. The State of Oklahoma is a monumental testimony to our modern recognition of pre-historic savage claims to our national territory. A full measure of civilization is the incoming reward of a late, but righteous regard for the rights of men, even though to an Indian. It may be stated, to the honor of the New England Colonies, whatever their patents may have granted as their territorial rights, that the early settlers, honestly and honorably, purchased and extinguished all Indian claims to lands, in accordance with English law and custom. In 1629, the Massachusetts Bay Company instructed their agent, Mr. John Endicott, to search out Indian claimants and satisfy their reasonable demands "that we may avoid the least scruples of intrusion." Those persons who received allotments of lands from the company were expected to satisfy the Indians and it is safe to say that not a foot of soil in Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, or Rhode Island Colonies, were held in violation of Indian rights.

## CHAPTER V

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CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY







ROGER WILLIAMS LANDING AT WHAT-CHEER ROCK, SEEKONK RIVER  
June, 1620



ROGER WILLIAMS RETURNING TO PROVIDENCE WITH  
PATENT, 1644  
From Painting in Providence County Court House

## CHAPTER V. CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

In 1894, Mr. Oscar S. Straus, an educated and able American Jew of New York, wrote a treatise on Roger Williams. He closes his Preface with this pregnant sentence: "*He was the pioneer of Religious Liberty. His whole life throbbed with that principle, upon which as a basis he was the first to establish a political community. The influence of his 'lively experiment' I will not attempt to measure. He was the apostle of the American system of a free Church in a free State.*" This is a bold declaration and challenges the most careful and thorough historical study as related to Rhode Island history. Religious liberty is the inherent right of an individual to believe and worship according to one's conscience and without restraint. Mr. Straus cannot make the founder of Providence the pioneer of that sort of liberty. The very stones of the street would deny such a statement, to say nothing of the voices of thousands and tens of thousands of men and women, who, during the centuries preceding and following the Reformation, had sealed their belief with their lives. The Jewish faith has been during all the centuries since Abraham and Moses the great expositor and defender of religious liberty. It would waste words to attempt to prove that Robert Browne was a pioneer of religious liberty when in 1584, in England, he wrote "they (the magistrates) may doe nothing concerning the church, but onelie civilities, and as civile magistrates; that is, they have not that authoritie over the church, as to be Prophetes or Priests, or Spiritual Kings, as they are Magistrates over the same; but onelie to rule the common wealth in all outwarde justice, to maintaine the right welfare and honor thereof with outwarde power, bodily punishment & civil forcing of men." Lets have done with all such unscholarly statements that Roger Williams was the *pioneer of religious liberty*. On the Continent—for the Waldenses were four hundred and fifty years ahead of him, and the Christian Church was sixteen hundred years in advance. Sir Thomas More died in the faith of Religious Liberty, a century before Roger Williams was banished from the Bay; and the compact of the Mayflower passengers was signed while Roger Williams was a school boy in his early teens. It is not historically true that Roger Williams was a pioneer of Religious Liberty. It would be difficult to prove that he even used the term, "Religious Liberty." He did use the phrases, "liberty of conscience," "distressed in conscience," and like terms,—all of which have a far different meaning, as we shall see in the historic revelation of the early years of the town of Providence.

The more significant part of Mr. Straus' statement declares that "Religious Liberty was the basis of the political community which Mr. Williams established at Providence." Was this an historic fact? Let us see.

Rhode Island is the name of one of the United States, the smallest in area, the greatest in historic fame. Its present legal title is THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS,—the names of the two Colonies that united to form the Federal State.

The name Rhode Island, or Isle of Rhodes, was first applied in 1644 to the Island, called by the Narragansett Indians, AQUIDNECK. Its earliest political value was the Colonial name of the two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, in distinction from the Colony of Providence Plantations, at the head of the Narragansett Bay. In this discussion, the name Rhode Island will be restricted to its early Colonial application as adopted by the General Court of Election of the two towns, on the 13th of March, 1644.

It is my purpose to show that the two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, occupying at that time the whole territory of the Island of Rhode Island and constituting the original Colony of Rhode Island, are entitled to the honor and distinction of Primacy in the establishment of a pure Democracy, coupled with Soul Freedom in a well ordered Civil Magistracy.

The physical area of this Commonwealth of high ideals was probably the smallest of the historic states of the world, its extreme length not exceeding sixteen miles and its breadth not over five miles. Its location on the Atlantic Coast line and its extensive landlocked harbor, gave its early planters an advantage in primitive commerce and fisheries which proved of great economic value. This Island, it may be noted, was first seen through European discovery, by John Verrazzano, who, skirting the New England Coast, in 1524, entered and explored the lower Narragansett Bay, calling the harbor and Island Refugio.

It is an interesting fact that the most notable "livelie experiment" in the practical application of the doctrines of civil and religious liberty in America or even in the world, should have been made in Rhode Island,—the smallest political unit on the Western Hemisphere. Its microscopic size and great water area, as compared with the land, would seem to preclude the possibility of applying great principles of government and public policy to a sufficiently large body of people to secure a constituency large enough or discrete enough to try out any great question to any wise or ultimate conclusions. There were, however, in the case of the early history of this little Colony, some peculiar facts that seem to upset any preconceived theory as to population or physical area.

The first fact is a physical one and has a large value in favor of

littleness. It is this,—Narragansett Bay and its tributaries trisect the area, separating the original settlements one from the other, thereby giving to each an opportunity, as an independent entity, to work out its own problems in its own individual way. Portsmouth and Newport were isolated on the Island of Aquidneck, twenty miles from Providence and fifteen from Warwick, the fourth of the Colonial towns. When long journeys in boats, on rough waters, propelled by the manual of arms, are the only means of communication, men and women are liable to stay at home and in a wilderness country do a considerable amount of thinking on their new life, its conditions and how to make them more tolerable.

Another fact appears in the personnel of the founders of the four Rhode Island towns. It is this—a great variety of types of men appear in these early settlements of Colonial founders. Some were mere adventurers, joining a migration with little of superior motives or large expectancy. Some were land hungry and saw in the Narragansett Country abundant areas for each householder, like the landed estates of Old England. Some were ambitious to make homes for permanent family life. Some sought freedom from civil restraint,—some an asylum for larger freedom than was granted in Fatherland and a sweeter expression of it than was exercised in Puritan Boston or even in Pilgrim Plymouth.

Our definition of a State is a political community, organized under a distinct government, recognized and conformed to by the people as supreme. It is essential to a State that there be some sort of civil government accepted as valid by its members, who live in a common region or locality. Growing out of the family it has a natural basis in man's social nature and relations, and develops a form decided by its constituency, and a legal basis and standard of ultimate appeal, in essential rights and justice.

The ideas of the men of the first half of the seventeenth century, born of English, French or German stock, were no less broad and substantial. Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut Colonies were founded on these essential foundations, guaranteed by Royal Charters. The civil State was composed of a body of men and women, in general agreement in matters of faith and polity, with an intelligent understanding of the relations of the individual to civil society.

This community of persons adopts a charter, compact, or constitution, embracing the basic principles of the inchoate state, with conditions and limitations as to freemanship and citizenship, thereby establishing an official organization,—the State,—with all the functions and officials necessary for the institution of orderly government. This compact also defines the quality of the government,—be it Monarchy or Democracy,—and the various needs of local government, that conditions may require. It is of

the utmost consequence that rules and laws be established for protecting the right of life, liberty, property and reputation, and the immediate choice and installation of competent officials to attend to the execution of the laws, adopted by the body politic.

These are some of the fundamental ideas of a State,—the germs of a Commonwealth,—of the American type. In our body politic of Rhode Island we are to assume the founding of a Democratic state, with absolute freedom of opinion and action in religious concerns. In our study of the state founded by Dr. John Clarke and his associates we shall find all the constituents above enumerated, incorporated into the institutions, laws, civil polity and administrative operations of the towns and Colony of Rhode Island, on Aquidneck, years in advance of any other body politic in the world.

Liberty is a very old word. It is found in all languages, but with different local meanings. Thomas Jefferson framed the sentiment in our Declaration of Independence, that all men "*are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*" The free exercise of the right of liberty has been greatly abridged in the life of the human race, as history records it, and, in multitudes of instances, both life and liberty have been ruthlessly trampled under foot and destroyed. The weak have been made the bond-servants of the strong, and body, mind and spirit have been enslaved to satisfy one or another of the ambitions or passions of the masterful classes among men. The story of "Man's inhumanity to man" is the burden of History. The shackles that have fettered the limbs have been oppressive and galling, but have never been so degrading and humiliating as those which have bound the larger freedom of speech and of worship.

The processes, by which people of various tongues have obtained larger and ever-increasing measures of liberty, constitute the warp and woof of History. The struggle for body and soul-freedom has been ages long,—at one point and period successful, at others going down in defeat, but all the while the spirit of liberty has never been vanquished.

"For Freedom's battle, once begun,  
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,  
Though baffled oft, is ever won."

It is not the motive of the author nor the purpose of this Story to do more than give a single chapter of this world contest,—the culmination, in the later stages of the Evolution of Civilization, of two great manifestations of liberty, Civil and Religious, and their union in a modern Democratic state. Here and there among men, had each of the principles found expression and partial illustration—the result of vision by men and social orders. Prior to the English Revolution of the Seventeenth Cen-

tury, however, nowhere on the face of the earth and among civilized men, did civil and soul-liberty jointly exist. It's first clear, full, deliberate, organized and permanent establishment in the world can now be distinctly traced to the Colony of Rhode Island, on the island of Aquidneck, in Narragansett Bay, under the leadership and inspiration of Dr. John Clarke, the true Founder.

In the evolution of modern Democracy, including soul-liberty, the three great nations of Western Europe,—Germany, France and England,—have been the chief actors.—Germany in the earlier stages, England in the later and France in both. Four events have signally advanced its progress. The first, and probably the most significant and far-reaching, was the first complete translation of the Bible into the English tongue, from the Vulgate, by Wyclif, about 1382. It is impossible, in our day, to appreciate the ardent reception of the Old and New Testament Scriptures by the Western mind and heart. Hebrew history and theology were incorporated bodily into English thought and speech and, in the Puritan Period, Hebrew nomenclature was almost universally adopted, thus restoring patriarchal relations and associations in family life. English literature was enriched by the stories of the Hebrew Captivity and Mosaic Deliverance. The Drama recited the heroic scenes of the Pentateuch, and Psalmody versified, in stumbling meter, the songs of Miriam, Deborah and Ruth and the Psalms of David.

The Hebrew Republic, under Moses as its great lawgiver, was a type for a modern state, while the teachings of Jesus and Paul taught the brotherhood of men, the fatherhood of God, and the standardization of human society on the basis of equality and fraternity,—the corner stones of Democracy. The Bible was the first and greatest guide the Western mind had ever had to lead it into the path of Liberty, with Jesus as its teacher.

The second great event in order of time, was the invention of the printing press, in Germany, about 1440. Through its agency in multiplying books,—especially the Bible,—the Western world began to learn to read, in order that it might, for itself, understand the lively oracles of God. Bibles and religious books soon became cheap enough to be the property of every family. The hungry fed on the Bread of Life. The thirsty drank from the fountains of Life.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was one of the mighty forces that reconstructed church and state in Germany and England, and more than that, as a bold advocate of reforms, temporal and spiritual, he set an example of independent thinking and utterance most salutary for his time. The century, from 1450 to 1550, was remarkable for a great awakening of German and Anglo-Saxon to ethical and spiritual truth, and in the open-

ing of the human mind to freedom of thought and expression. It was the century of Discovery. Columbus gave Spain the sceptre of Western domain. Cabot enlarged the bounds of the New World on both Northern and Southern horizons, while Verazzano, an Italian, sailing under the French flag, explored the Northern Atlantic Coasts and penetrated the recesses of New York and Narragansett Bays.

While these European navigators were opening the doors of a New World, in the West, Copernicus, of German birth, the navigator of the Heavens, discovered and announced to the world the laws of planetary and stellar motion,—a new Heavens,—the correlate of the new Earth of Columbus and Americus Vespuccius.

With the fall of Constantinople, in 1453, Greek scholars fled to the West. A revival in letters, art and philosophy sprang up in Italy, France, England and Germany. South of the Alps, art flourished in the works of Michael Angelo, Titian, Correggio, Da Vinci and Raphael. North of the Alps, science, philosophy, social order, free institutions, law and religion, gave character to the "New Learning." The age brought forth Sir Thomas More, Colet, Calvin, Knox, Melancthon, Zwingli and Sebastian Castellio, 1515-1563,—the first great champion of a "free conscience," and of "Toleration in Religious Belief."

The "New Learning" of the schools and universities of England was passionately seized by the English mind. Students flocked to the seats of learning at Oxford, Cambridge and London, or, in humbler ways, found in the new literature of the day, satisfaction and delight in the revelations of ancient Greek or Latin philosophy, law, religion and government. The last two subjects especially occupied the thoughts of men, inasmuch as absolutism on the part of royalty had stirred the people into a conscious revolt against arbitrary and vicious acts in government, and the teachings of the Scriptures had liberated the minds of the people from the ignorance and superstitions of the established church.

In this age of "Wonderful Awakening" the Puritan was born. This new man was born Catholic and Protestant. As a Catholic, he accepted the great doctrines of the church as taught by the Fathers. His faith in God was complete. His belief in Justification, in Sanctification and in the mediatorial Sacrifice, could not be challenged. As a Protestant, he conceived the individual freedom of worship and the rights of the governed in the affairs of state. Magna Charta had a new meaning, in the light of the teachings of Jesus. The freeman and the free state became mental possibilities in the sixteenth century of English history. It was in this period of mental, spiritual and political agitation, the last half of this sixteenth century,—that brilliant epoch of the reign of Queen Elizabeth,—that the American Democracy also was born. This remarkable activity

was both destructive and constructive. It destroyed absolutism in Church and State. It constructed a fabric of popular government, in which every man was both sovereign and subject in matters temporal and spiritual. The absolute freedom of the English subject in religious concerns was then set as the corner stone of a new political and spiritual edifice.

The Rev. Robert Browne, founder of the Brownists, now the Congregationalists (1584), thus defined the relationship of the church and state. "They (the magistrates) may doe nothing concerning the church, but onlie ciuill, and as ciuill magistrates; that is, they haue not that authoritie ouer the church as to be prophetes or priestes, or spirituall kings, as they are magistrates ouer the same; but onlie to rule the common wealth in all outward justice, to maintaine the right welfare and honor thereof with outward power, bodily punishment and ciuill forcing of men." This is a clear, bold utterance of a free conscience of a free church in a sovereign state. Again he writes: "Goe to, therefore, and the outward power and ciuill forcings let us leue to the magistrates: to rule the common wealth in all outward justice, belongeth to them: but let the church rule in spiritual wise, and not in wordlie manner: by a liuelie lawe preached, and not by a ciuill law written." "For it is the conscience and not the power of man that will drive us to seeke the Lordes Kingdom." It is very obvious that Robert Browne taught the independence of church and state and in that doctrine taught also full liberty of the individual conscience in religion. This doctrine was also taught in a "Plea for Liberty of Conscience" by Leonard Busher, 1614, and by John Murton in his two treatises against "Persecution for Religion as Contrary to Divine and Human Testimonies," 1620.

Briefly stated, the situation of affairs in England, as related to civil and religious matters at the opening of the seventeenth century (1603), was as follows: The seventeenth century opened in the midst of the brilliant literary and philosophical period of English history, inaugurated by Queen Elizabeth, who had still further distinguished herself by a constant and firm control over the English church and state. James the First, ruler of England from 1603 to 1625, asserted the theory of the divine right of kingship and episcopacy, in no degree relaxing the laws on the statute books as to Puritan nonconformity. In 1607, a body of liberal Puritans called Separatists, emigrated to Holland and, in 1620, constituted the Plymouth Colony, which was chartered by James to establish a government on the shores of Massachusetts Bay,—the first of the New England colonies founded on Democracy in government.

England was divided politically into two hostile camps,—Royalist and Puritan. The Royalist was loyal to the King and the Church. He saw in both the safe-guard of all he held dear. He was a reactionist, not a

statesman. The heritage of Old England was to him of greater value than any possible future could be. The King, the Court, the Church, the Prelacy, were sacred organisms of God's making. He hated the words Freedom, Democracy, Toleration, as devices of the Devil, and would persecute and expel from the Kingdom as demons, all who cherished them. He belonged to the Aristocracy of learning, wealth, chivalry, luxury, and the love for woman. Religion was to him a form, not a sacrament. Life had no great ambitions. Death had no terrors for Cavalier or Red Cross Knight.

"The Puritans," says Macaulay, "were the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced." Religion was their chief concern and business. It was an integral element of their daily life. Political matters were religious matters. The liberal Puritan stood for freedom in personal rights, freedom in civil concerns, freedom in faith. The Bible was his guide and teacher in things temporal and things spiritual. Samuel Gorton, one of the founders of Warwick, writing of himself, says, "*I yearned for a country where I could be free to worship God according to what the Bible taught me, as God enabled me to understand it. I left my native country (England) to enjoy liberty of conscience in respect to faith toward God and for no other end.*" This "yearning" was the possession of the body of English Puritans, not the exclusive exercise by a few. The right to worship God as conscience dictated was a soul right, by creation,—not man-given. No royal edict proclaimed it. No royal edict could curtail it. The new religion and the teachings of the new Bible taught it. Jesus was its great expounder in the Gospels and Paul in the Epistles. The great body of martyrs, who suffered at the stake, bore testimony to their love for spiritual liberty. Of great Englishmen, standing in the forefront of the battle, in defense of civil and soul freedom, were John Hampden, gentleman, Sir Harry Vane, scholar, Oliver Cromwell, soldier and statesman. These great souls were types of the great historic life, in which they were leaders, in the contest for soul liberty on English soil. The Puritan age of England and America, the seventeenth century, was an age of great religious faith, an age of heroic independences, an age of over-masterful longing for freedom of worship and the severance of the church and secular governments. The individualistic man had come to demand his rightful kingdom and kingship. The crown was the rightful property of the real Koenig,—the man of kingly character. The tragic end of Charles the First proved to the world that the king could do wrong to his subjects, and that the sacredness of the regal throne was no cloak to conceal the crime and no barrier to protect from its punishment. The elevation of the great commoner, Cromwell, was added proof that the men behind the guns and the ploughs

were the real rulers of the state. Out of all that political, social, civil, religious unrest has come stable, constitutional government, a just respect for law, a material prosperity unbounded and an expanding civilization which dominates not only the North American continent, but wields a powerful and a moulding influence in old-world governments.

Of those Pilgrims who came to New England, Mrs. Hemans asks,

"What sought they thus afar?  
Bright jewels of the mine?  
The wealth of seas  
The spoils of war?  
They sought a faith's pure shrine.

"Aye, call it holy ground  
The place where first they trod,  
They have left unstained what there they found  
Freedom to worship God."

The fact cannot be too strongly emphasized, that the cardinal doctrines of the Puritan body in England were the overturning of arbitrary kingly authority, a large measure of freedom for the average man in civil affairs and conscience liberty for all men. For these and their allied privileges, they stood as the defenders in the great struggle with Charles I. All believed that a man's conscience as to religion was not subject to the laws of the State, as his conduct was. All thought that a man ought to be free to worship God as he pleased, provided he did not interfere with the rights of his neighbors. All believed in "a church without a Bishop, a state without a King." All migrated or were banished "on account of their dangerous and pernicious doctrine," so that when they came to dwell on the shores of a New World they were all in a true sense exiles for liberty's sake.

Historical writers are practically agreed that in Rhode Island, civil and religious liberty were first established and permanently maintained. As there may be a confusion of thought as to what constitutes religious liberty and its pseudonyms, conscience liberty, soul liberty, etc., a brief discussion thereon follows:

The terms Freedom, Liberty, Religious Liberty or Soul Liberty and Liberty of Conscience are in frequent use by the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first two are generic and synonymous. The others are particular, relating to specific and well defined areas of thought and experience. Liberty of Conscience is a broad term, inclusive of all matters in the domain of Ethics. It is subjective rather than objective. It is a state, not a relation. It rests on the inalienable right of belief or faith and is another name for convictions or the moral sense. Our convictions are inward possessions, and, if unexpressed by word or deed, are beyond the knowledge of other than the possessor and beyond

question by any. My conscience may say there is no God and that I am under no obligation to a Supreme Being. It may deny the immortality of the Soul or the reward of right action and the punishment of wrong doing. My conscience may approve of the liquor traffic. It may lead me to oppose organized government and the ordinances of the civil magistrate. I am at full liberty to hold and cherish any or all of these convictions. If I give no expression to these ideas, I am safe from criticism or restraint. I may be a thief, an adulterer, a murderer, in thought, motive or conviction, but I am not amenable to the law unless I steal or take the life of a fellow. My conscience may tell me that I ought to drown my child to appease the Gods and save my own soul, but society cannot question my moral judgment until I commit the act or teach the doctrine. This is liberty as to conscience.

But what will civil society say to-day, if I utter my convictions in the ears of my fellow men? It will say this. If my beliefs as to civic principles and policies run counter to the majority of the society around me and are subversive of the civil organism—the state,—I am liable and justly responsible to such society for judgment on the same. If the state regards my opinions as subversive of its principles and a threat to its life, it would be strangely delinquent in its obligations to its founders and foundations, not to restrain my acts and the public expression of my opinions, however honest and conscientious I may be in their expression. Differences of opinion as to human conduct, laws and civil administration, must and always will exist, but such differences among men are often only differing viewpoints that do not reach the domain of conscience *per se*, much less the narrower but higher realm in matters of personal religion and worship where the religious conscience holds sway. As between man and man, individual right of conscience or the moral sense is supreme within the bounds of reason. As between man and society and civil government a limitation must be made as to authority and a sharp line of demarcation drawn as to two supreme facts,—the human soul and God. These—the soul and God—live apart, in a superior world, under higher than human laws, within the most sacred Holy of Holies of man's being. In this relationship, absolute freedom of action and of sentiment must exist, and over it civil authority can have no legitimate control. Man can say to the magistrate, "Hitherto shalt thou come but no farther." Soul-liberty and worship is man's castle, which no human being, no court of justice, no magistrate, no law, no civil state, no high potentate can enter with impunity, without human consent. God, the soul, worship, natural and revealed religion, faith, prayer, all spiritual beliefs as to time and eternity are the subject matter of soul-liberty. This is the realm of Religious Liberty, Soul Liberty, Spiritual Liberty. With Madame Roland

we cry out, "O Liberty, Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!" Liberty cannot descend to the realm of license to justify illegal or immoral acts. The Decalogue is recognized as a Divine Instrument. I cannot set up conscience liberty in justification of Sabbath-breaking, profanity or adultery. The State licenses the sale of intoxicants. I disbelieve in the policy and disclaim participation in the legislation, thereby keeping a clean conscience in the full enjoyment of my civic liberty. Public policy is state-craft wherein, in a Democracy, the majority-rule becomes the law of all the people who accept its protection and its provisions. The civic conscience may enter its protest or approval, but in no sense is the doctrine of Soul or Religious Liberty traversed.

John Locke (1632-1704), in his "*Letters on Toleration*," restricts and defines "The Jurisdiction of the Magistrate, excluding it from the regulation of public worship or the control of religious beliefs, except so far as such worship or beliefs may interfere with the ends of civil government." "The provinces of a Church and a Commonwealth are distinct and separate and easily well defined. The bounds are absolute." "As to speculative opinions, tenets and practices of any religious community, the civil magistrate has no right of restraint." Locke declared, "No opinions contrary to human society, or to those moral rules which are necessary to human society, are to be tolerated by the magistrate." "Religious orthodox persons, who claim for themselves any peculiar privileges or power above others in civil concerns, or who, upon any pretense of religion or morality, challenge any manner of authority over others not of their faith, have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate as those that will not own and teach the duty of tolerating all men in matters of mere religion." "Those are not to be tolerated who deny the being of God. Promises, covenants and oaths which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold on an atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all." "Liberty is the power a man has to do or forbear doing any particular action, according as its doing or forbearing has the actual preference in his mind."

The Lord Proprietors of North Carolina, in 1663, thus defined Religious Liberty for its citizens: "We will grant, in as ample manner as undertakers shall desire, freedom and liberty of conscience in all religious or spiritual things and to be kept inviolably with them, we having power in our charter to do so." This Declaration was modified by the charter of Charles the Second, 1665. "No person or persons unto whom such liberty shall be given (*i.e.*, who cannot join the Church of England) shall be any way molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion, or practice in matters of religious concerns, who do not actually disturb the civil peace of the province, county or

colony that they shall make their abode in. But all and every such person and persons may, from time to time, and at all times, freely and quietly have and enjoy his and their judgments and consciences, in matters of religion, throughout all the said province or colony, they behaving themselves peaceably, and not using this liberty to licentiousness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others."

The following limitations were declared in 1669: "No man can be a freeman of Carolina or have an estate or habitation within it that doth not acknowledge a God; and that God is publicly and solemnly worshipped." "No person whatsoever shall speak anything in their religious assembly irreverently or seditiously of the government, the governors, or of state matters."

A revision of the North Carolina constitution in 1876 thus defines Religious Liberty: "All men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience and no human authority should in any case whatsoever interfere with the right of conscience." As the Carolinas were founded by John Locke and his Disciples it is of interest to note the interpretation given to Religious Liberty by that school of philosophy.

The Bill of Rights of Massachusetts, adopted in 1780, defines and limits Religious Liberty as follows:

Art. I. All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness.

Art. II. It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly, and at stated seasons to worship the *Supreme Being*, the great Creator and Preserver of the Universe. And no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience: or for his religious profession of sentiments: provided he doth not disturb the public peace, or obstruct others in their religious worship.

The Maryland Constitution of 1776 is quite in keeping with the statutes of other states:

Art. 36. That as it is the duty of every man to worship God in such manner as he thinks most acceptable to Him, all persons are equally entitled to protection in their religious liberty: wherefore no person ought, by any law to be molested in his person or estate, on account of his religious persuasion or profession, or for his religious practice, unless, under the color of religion, he shall disturb the good order, peace or safety of the state, or shall infringe the laws of morality, or injure others in their natural, civil or religious rights.

A careful study of these constitutional provisions as to Religious Liberty shows that full protection is assured to the citizenship in matters of religious faith and worship, with the proviso that no person can, "under the color of religion," or right of Conscience, "disturb the good order, peace or safety of the State," or "injure others in their natural, civil or religious rights." By these fixed standards we may measure the claims of those who may worthily and rightfully wear the honor of Founders of Religious Liberty.

In law, "*liberty* is freedom from all restraints except such as the lawful rights of others prescribe." "*Civil Liberty* implies the subjection of the individual members of a community to laws imposed by the community as a whole; but it does not imply the assent of each individual to these laws." "*Religious or soul liberty* is the right of freely adopting and professing opinions on religious subjects, and of worshiping or refraining from worship, according to the dictates of conscience, without external control." These definitions from THE CENTURY DICTIONARY will be our tests for determining the quality of the government established, the policies pursued, and the administrations of the social, civil, judicial and religious institutions.

It must be understood that "opinions" and "conscience liberty" do not fall within the province of civil or religious liberty. Both are loose terms and admit of the grossest license and immoralities. It is well known that lewdness, licentiousness and adultery stalked abroad in the early years of Colonial life under the title of "personal liberty;" that the wildest political vagaries were styled "opinions," and criminals of all sorts justified corruption in purpose and practise on the claim that "conscience scruples" approved and justified their doings. In fact every crime possible within the scope of the Decalogue has found its defence in "liberty of conscience," and "no rogue ever felt the halter draw with a good opinion of the law." A "distressed conscience" has often made atonement for very black crimes. Let us take good care not to confound "religious liberty" with its arch-enemy "conscience liberty." "Soul liberty" and a "distressed conscience," are in no way related. Their differences are as wide as the poles. What we are now seeking to determine is where, when and by whom were Civil Liberty and Religious Liberty, as defined, first established and fully maintained in our Commonwealth.

In the settlement of the original New England Colonies the treatment of religious differences was a matter of grave concern. In the Bay Colony, a freeman, a man having the privilege of voting and holding office, must be a member of the Puritan Church. The same was true of the Connecticut Colony at Hartford, a child of the Bay Colony, led by Rev. Thomas Hooker, who, with Rev. John Cotton, was the author of the

"Summe of Church Discipline." In Plymouth Colony, "no erroneous person" could be admitted as an inhabitant or sojourner. By "erroneous person" was meant such as held "damnable heresies inconsistent with the faith of the Gospel," as a denial of the Trinity or any person therein, of the Deity of Christ, of His full satisfaction of the Divine Justice, His resurrection, ascension, second personal coming, the resurrection of the dead, belief in consubstantiation, transubstantiation, giving Divine adoration to any creature or any other anti-Christian doctrine, a denial of the magistrates' powers to punish evil doers, a denial of the Sabbath, speaking reproachfully of the Churches of Christ." On various controversial points, as baptism, pedobaptism, church discipline, full liberty was granted. The same general limitations as to the qualifications of inhabitants existed in Massachusetts Bay Colony. From the dreadful turmoils and bitter persecution of sects and sectaries in England they had crossed the sea. They sincerely sought to live as Christian men and women should. Toleration to them meant the undisturbed possession and exercise of their religious principles and activities. The Boston Puritan of the seventeenth century had no use for a Baptist, a Quaker, a Churchman, a Roman Catholic, or an infidel; their presence on the soil of the Bay was a menace to the peace and the solidarity of the Puritan faith. Errors in religious belief, as rated by Puritan standards, were adjudged treasonable to the Commonwealth. Cotton Mather was the expositor of early New England orthodoxy, in its right to rest undisturbed in its new estate, as against all disturbing agencies. And here it must be conceded that the threatened dangers of heretical opinions, as interpreted by the Bay settlers was not so much in the possession and ordinary exercise of the divergent and conflicting views as in the excesses in conduct and in proselytism which were incident to the age and the controversialists who filled it with their Babel jargon. The Church and the Commonwealth both were the *Ark of the Covenant* of the Puritan. An unholy disturbance of the sacred content of either was an act of unpardonable treason to both, when Church and State were one.

Prior to the adoption of this restrictive legislation of the Bay Colony, no direct act of the court or magistracy can be traced to religious intolerance, except in the treatment of Anne Hutchinson's party and the Exeter, New Hampshire exodus under Wheelwright, and even in these instances, as well in that of the banishment of Roger Williams, the General Court interpreted the events as treason to the State, and tending to the overthrow of Civil Government in the Colony. Excepting the Hutchinson-Aquidneck migration, it is difficult to maintain the position that the Bay Colony exercised a spirit of religious intolerance towards any emigrants coming to Rhode Island prior to 1644. Subsequent to that date and dur-

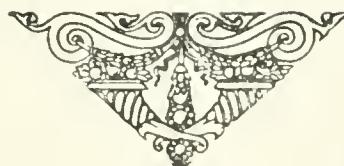
ing the Governorship of John Endicott of Salem, all persecuted persons,— Baptists, Quakers and Jews and even Roman Catholics found an asylum and city of refuge at Newport, the original and conspicuous home of toleration for all persons excluded by the Act of 1644. In the history of the founding of the four chief towns of Rhode Island, Newport, Portsmouth, Providence and Warwick, that were united in a Colonial organization in 1647, we shall discover the leading motive of settlement of each and the principal actors in the event.

Two or three propositions will enable us to reach correct conclusions in the application of the Rhode Island doctrine as to Religious Liberty. Absolute liberty is an impossible state or condition,—

FIRST, *Liberty*, in law, is freedom from all restraints, except such as the legal rights of others limit and prescribe.

SECOND, *Conscience liberty* is the right of a person to individual opinions on any and all subjects in accord with moral judgements as regulated by the laws of nature, and subject in expression, to the laws of society.

THIRD, *Religious liberty* is the right of freely adopting and professing opinions on moral and religious subjects, and of worshipping or refraining from worship, according to the dictates of conscience, and in noninterference with the rights of others.





## CHAPTER VI

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EARLY SETTLERS OF RHODE ISLAND



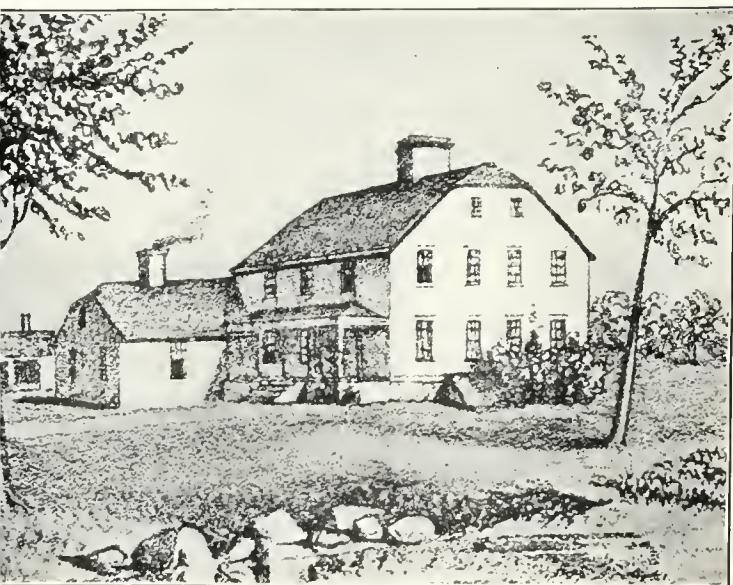




OLD STATE HOUSE, PROVIDENCE, R. I.  
1763-1900



OLD STONE MILL, NEWPORT  
Gov. Benedict Arnold's Grist-Mill  
Mentioned in Will, 1678



RICHARD SMITH BLOCK HOUSE  
Near Wickford Harbor



ANCIENT ARNOLD HOUSE—  
ONE ROOM  
Lincoln Woods Park  
Date Unknown

## CHAPTER VI.

### EARLY SETTLERS OF RHODE ISLAND.

Rhode Island is a small State with a history of large significance, wholly out of proportion to its area. Within its little territory four towns or settlements were made, prior to 1644—Providence and Warwick, at the north, constituting PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS; Portsmouth and Newport, at the south, settled in 1638 and 1639, respectively, united in the formation of the COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND, in 1640. In 1647 the two sets of colonial towns were united in one political body, known as "PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN THE NARRAGANSETT BAY IN NEW ENGLAND," a name coined by Roger Williams in 1643. This official title of the two groups of settlements was superseded by the title of THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, as established by the GREAT CHARTER of 1663, thereby recognizing the original names of both colonies. This title is the official name of the State to-day—THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

For a clear understanding of the historic movements which have resulted in the creation of the political unit in the Federal Union called Rhode Island, it should be clearly stated and intelligently understood that two distinct independent colonies were organized on Narragansett Bay; and that the name of ROGER WILLIAMS was and should ever be associated with the founding of PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS—the colony at the head of Narragansett Bay. It should be as clearly stated and intelligently understood that the names of Dr. John Clarke and William Coddington are and always should be inseparably connected with the founding of RHODE ISLAND COLONY, on the Island of Aquidneck, thirty miles south of PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, at the junction of Narragansett Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. ROGER WILLIAMS had only an incidental relation to the settlement at AQUIDNECK in assisting in the purchase of the island, as the place of settlement. On the other hand, CLARKE, CODDINGTON and their associates of Rhode Island Colony had no part nor lot in the building of the PLANTATIONS. It is of utmost importance that the distinctly separate histories of the two groups of settlements should be kept in mind. Roger Williams settled at Providence in 1636. He may be styled the Father of PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS. Here he lived, labored and died. Providence was, in large measure, what Mr. Williams made or failed to make it. Clarke and Coddington settled at Portsmouth, in 1638. They and their associates made RHODE ISLAND COLONY, they were its distinctive founders, declaring its principles and shaping its policy. The colonies of PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS and RHODE ISLAND were as dis-

tinctly separate and apart from each other as PLYMOUTH COLONY from MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY, as HARTFORD COLONY from NEW HAVEN, as NEW YORK from NEW JERSEY. Men err when they speak of Roger Williams as the founder of Rhode Island. Men equally err who should speak of Dr. John Clarke as the founder of Providence Plantations. Each wrought in his own way, in the chosen sphere of his life activities, Williams at Providence, Clarke at Newport.

In this new history of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, it is our purpose to show the motives, methods and characteristics of the founders of the two colonies which made our little Commonwealth. We hope to make clear to the students of our history the contributions of each of the founders to the social, moral, civil and religious upbuilding of two distinct colonies—later united in a single colony and State. PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, its associate founders, its ongoing, its successes, its failures, center about Roger Williams. With its successes, he succeeds. With its failures, he fails. RHODE ISLAND COLONY centres about Dr. John Clarke and Governor William Coddington. That colony stands or falls by the success or failure of the principles of the founders and the institutions growing therefrom. To the founding of PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS by ROGER WILLIAMS and the founding of RHODE ISLAND COLONY by DR. JOHN CLARKE, we now invite your studious attention.

THE FOUNDING OF PROVIDENCE.—The first white man to settle on the soil of Providence Plantations was the Rev. William Blackstone. A pioneer in a new country is always an interesting personage, and William Blackstone has a fine story to tell us. He was born in England in the year 1595, while Elizabeth was completing the establishment of the Anglican church and fighting the Puritan uprising. Young Blackstone graduated from Cambridge University in 1617, was ordained an Episcopal clergyman in 1621, and in 1623 joined the Gorges expedition to found a New England colony, with headquarters at or near Boston, having jurisdiction, civil and ecclesiastical, over all settlements in this part of America. The Gorges Company sat down at Wessagussett, but so weakly was the enterprise backed in England that the leaders returned home, leaving a small remnant to shift for themselves.

In 1625 Blackstone, "a bookish recluse," took up the lands on the Shawmut Peninsula, now Boston, and built the first house ever raised on that territory. It stood on the west slope of Beacon Hill, on land now bounded by Beacon street and Charles street, and faced the lands known as Boston Common. Here he lived alone, trading with the Indians, cultivating his garden and watching the growth of his apple trees—the first orchard in the Bay Colony. His nearest neighbors were Thomas Walford, the blacksmith, and his wife, at Mishawum, or Charlestown, living in an "English palisadoed and thatched house."

and Samuel Maverick, a man of twenty-eight, at East Boston, whose house was a trading post and a fort, armed with four large guns. All the settlers at that time outside of Plymouth belonged to the Church of England, though Blackstone declared he left England because he was weary of "the lord bishops;" Mr. Blackstone appears to be the first of the colonial non-conformists to declare his independence of the Established Church on New England soil.

In June, 1630, Governor Winthrop and his company arrived in Boston Harbor and landed in Charlestown, where they planned to set up their seat of government, but that purpose was abandoned on account of the lack of good water. Much sickness prevailed and several deaths occurred. Mr. Blackstone, in the meantime "dwelling on the other side of Charles River alone, at a place called by ye Indians Shawmut \* \* \* came and acquainted the Governor of an excellent spring there; withal inviting him and soliciting him thither." As a result the Winthrop party removed to the peninsula, then called Blackstone's Neck, built their houses and called the place Boston, after Boston, England, the home of some of the company.

Concerning the agreement between Mr. Blackstone and the Winthrop Company as to the occupation of Blackstone Neck, we have no records, until 1634, when Mr. Blackstone sold his landed interest for thirty dollars, reserving for himself six acres, including his house, on the north side of what is now Beacon street. Many distinguished Bostonians have lived on this six-acre area, among whom were Copley, Channing, Harrison Gray Otis, Prescott, David Sears, Motley, Charles Francis Adams, Francis Parkman, and others.

The same year Mr. Blackstone purchased some cattle, and making his way through the wilderness for forty miles by the guide of Indian trails, camped on the left bank of the Pawtucket (Blackstone) river, near the present village of Lonsdale. Why he left Boston for a solitary home at Study Hill is partially revealed in a noteworthy statement made on his departure from Boston: "I left England to get from under the power of the lord bishops, but in America I am fallen under the lord brethren. I looked to have dwelt with my orchards and my books, and my young fawn and bull, in undisturbed solitude. Was there not room enough for all of ye? Could ye not leave the hermit in his corner?" Just how the "lord brethren" exercised their "power" towards the quiet, studious but doughty Blackstone does not appear, but a sentence in Lechford's *PLAIN DEALING*, published in London in 1641, gives a clue in the case: "One Master *Blakeston* went from Boston, having lived there nine or ten yeares, because he would not joyne with the church; he lives neere Master *Williams*, but is far from his opinions." Of "Master Williams," he writes: "At Providence \* \* \* lives Master Williams and his company

of divers opinions. Most are Anabaptists ; they hold there is no true visible church in the Bay, nor in the world, nor any true ministerie."

Looking into the acts of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, we find an order under date of May 18, 1631, that reads: "To the end the body of the Commons may be preserved of honest and good men, it was likewise ordered and agreed that for time to come noe man shalbe admitted to the freedom of this body politicke, but such as are members of some of the churches within the lymitts of the same." In addition to the qualification of church membership, every person over sixteen years of age was required to take "The Freeman's Oath," enacted by the General Court of the Bay Colony, May 14, 1634, containing the pledges, "submitting my selfe to the wholesome laws made and established by the same."

The case of Mr. Blackstone seems to stand thus. He is still an ordained minister of the Anglican church, in a measure a non-conformist, but not of the Puritan sort. To remain in the Bay Colony he must subscribe to the freeman's oath, which demands full obedience to all laws ordained by a Puritan Church-State. He must also join the Puritan Church, thereby relinquishing his allegiance to the Church of England. In this dilemma—Boston and the Puritan Church on the one hand and a solitary home among the Indians on the banks of the Pawtucket—with absolute freedom, civil and ecclesiastical—he made choice of the forest, free from the power of "the lord brethren" of Boston. Mr. Blackstone had been the sole owner of the peninsula of Blackstone's Neck for ten years, and the sole pioneer occupant in his own home on his own plantation for six years. He welcomes Governor Winthrop and his company of English non-conformists to become fellow-occupants of his lands bought of the Indians. They establish the Bay Colony and their laws, as to church and state, conflict with Mr. Blackstone's convictions. Undoubtedly he made protests against what he called tyrannical laws, concerning which no record exists. His voluntary exile will not deprive him of the honor of being the founder of Boston in 1624, while it entitles him to the added honor of being the first permanent settler in the State of Rhode Island, and the first planter on the soil of Providence Plantations, in the year 1634.

Mr. Blackstone's plantation included lands on both banks of the Pawtucket river. His house, named Study Hall, stood on a hill on the left bank, which he named Study Hill, within what is now the town of Cumberland, Rhode Island. "The Catholic Oak," then in its grand maturity, stood near his house. Here he planted apple trees and possibly other fruit trees and vines, as he was fond of agriculture and horticulture. These trees were the first that ever bore fruit in Rhode Island. "He had the first apples of that sort called 'Yellow Sweetings' that were ever in the world perhaps, the richest and most delicious apple of the whole kind."

(2 M. H. C. ix, 174). Apples from Blackstone's orchard were sold in Boston, in 1730. Many of his trees planted 130 years before were still bearing when Governor Hopkins wrote in 1765, and we are told that as late as 1830 three of the trees were living and two of them bore apples.

Governor Arnold tells us that Blackstone frequently came to Providence to preach "and to encourage his younger hearers gave them the first apples they ever saw." His cows furnished him milk, butter and cheese, and Mr. Blackstone has the honor of being the first dairyman as well as pomologist of Rhode Island.

Blackstone occasionally visited Boston, and married, July 4, 1759, Mrs. Sarah Stephenson, widow of John Stephenson, who lived on Milk street, on the site of the building in which Benjamin Franklin was born.

In 1656 it was ordered by the General Assembly of Rhode Island, "That Mr. William Blaxton shall have libertie to record the right of his land in the record of our Collony." By this and other acts Mr. Blackstone was recognized as a citizen of Rhode Island.

In 1666 he petitioned the Rhode Island Assembly for relief from molestation as to lands by Mr. John Brown, of Plymouth Colony, and Mr. John Clarke was ordered to warn that colony not to molest Mr. Blackstone in the quiet possession of his lands.

The Rehoboth records state: "Mrs. Sarah Blackstone, the wife of Mr. William Blackstone, buried about the middle of June, 1673."

In his later years Mr. Blackstone, when no longer able to travel on foot, rode on a bull that he had broken to bridle and saddle. He died at Study Hill, Cumberland, Rhode Island, May 26, 1675. Roger Williams, under date of June 13, writes: "About a fortnight since, your old acquaintance, Mr. Blackstone departed this life in the four-score years of his age; four days before his death he had a great paine in his breast and back and bowels; afterwards he said he was well, had no paines, and should live; but he grew fainter and yealded up his spirit without a groane."

The inventory of his personal property was £56, 3s. 6d., including three Bibles, six English books in folio, three Latin books in folio, eight biggest books, fifteen quarto books, fourteen small books in quarto, thirty books in large octavo, twenty-five small books, twenty-two duodecimos, fifty-three small books without covers and ten paper books. All were destroyed by fire with Study Hall, which was burned by the Indians in Philip's War. His real estate, including the Blackstone Meadow, was estimated at 200 acres.

Tradition has it that Mr. Blackstone often preached at various neighboring settlements and there is conclusive evidence that he preached once each month at Richard Smith's home at Cociunscussuc.

William Blackstone was a peculiar type of man to become a pioneer settler in a distant land. At the age of twenty-four his preparatory education for the university was completed and he had taken clerical orders in the Established Church. Joining the monarchical expedition, led by Fernando Gorges, he comes to New England to aid in setting up a government which has for its object the control of all colonization of this section of the American continent, bringing Plymouth Colony under its domination. The Gorges movement collapses at the very outset, most of the party return to England, while Blackstone and a few others, including Samuel Maverick, stay to become permanent dwellers in and around Shawmut. Blackstone purchases Shawmut of the Indians and makes it his solitary home until the arrival of Governor Winthrop in 1630. Maverick is the first permanent settler on Naddles Island, now East Boston. Later he becomes a large figure in the Bay Colony.

With the meagre story of subsequent events in mind, what place shall we give to the first settlers on Rhode Island soil, a founder and co-founder, whom Rhode Island should forever hold in honor?

That William Blackstone was a brave soul we cannot doubt. Bradford and Standish had a company of associates, counsellors and defenders. Blackstone faced forest and Indian perils alone. His log hut at Shawmut stood in the midst of wild beasts and barbarous savages. That he was a student appears in the inventory of his library at his death. His interest in agriculture is shown in his gardens and apple orchards at Boston and at Study Hill. That he was hospitable is clear from his invitation to Governor Winthrop and his colony to share with him the lands at Shawmut. That he was tolerant towards men of other ecclesiastical opinions is manifest in inviting the Puritan Church to sit down beside an ordained churchman. He was a peace-maker, not a revolutionist, in that he chose to sell Shawmut to the Bay Colony rather than fight the Puritan Church-State, even when, occupying his own plantations.

Looking at William Blackstone, separated from us by three centuries, he seems to stand out above the mists and storms of the troubrous times in which he lived in the clear light of the upper skies, as a man of conscience, courage and faith. All these qualities are manifest in holding fast to the principle of soul liberty when confronted by the enactments of "The Freeman's Oath" and church membership. He saw in these ecclesiastic acts the tyranny from which he had escaped by leaving England. Whatever may be said of others, William Blackstone was the first to declare by act on American soil the absolute independence of the individual man in things of the spirit. His voluntary exile from his chosen home at Boston, his quiet, unobtrusive life at Study Hill, his lifelong, consistent adherence to the grand principles of a nonconformist faith, entitle this man of men—this man of heroic size in an heroic age—to the

admiration, the honor, the emulation of all men. From him we may learn that "all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties, and must be both enterprised and overcome with answerable courages."

Sometime, somewhere, within our Commonwealth, with singular fitness within our Capitol area, will be raised, with absolute certainty, some enduring memorial in honor of William Blackstone, of Study Hill, the first permanent white settler on the soil of Rhode Island. He has written his own epitaph in the speech made on leaving Boston:

"I CAME FROM ENGLAND BECAUSE I DID NOT LIKE THE LORD BISHOPS, BUT I CANNOT JOIN WITH YOU BECAUSE I WOULD NOT BE UNDER THE LORD BRETHREN."

William Blackstone was a pioneer settler of the Colonies of Massachusetts Bay and of Providence Plantations, but he was not a founder. His home and life were apart from men. Only a few sentences of what he spoke or wrote survive. As a recluse he lived and died. He invited no followers, he set forth no constructive plan of government, he left no memorial of his life work. The river, on whose banks he planted and toiled and died, will bear his name and witness his singular virtues, so singularly in contrast with the characteristics of others, who later made him their near neighbor. It was on Rhode Island soil that he lived, wrought, studied, died, and his dust is mingled with the rich soils of the valley at Lonsdale, where a monument marks his ancient home.

The next white men to follow W. Blackstone and settle in the wilderness of the Moshassuck Valley were William Arnold and his son, Benedict, who came to Providence, April 20, 1636, a short time in advance of Roger Williams. The Arnold family arrived in New England, June 24, 1635, stayed at Hingham until the spring of the following year, when father and son moved westward, crossing the Seekonk and settling in the Narragansett country. They were probably accompanied by William Carpenter, son-in-law of the elder Arnold, who married Elizabeth Arnold, his daughter. Arnold's family consisted of his wife Christian, and four children, Elizabeth, 1611; Benedict, 1615; Joanna, 1617, and Stephen, 1622.

The Arnolds were strong, self-centered men, independent in thought and purpose, vigorous in action and became the progenitors of a distinguished Rhode Island family. Two Governors, one Lieutenant-Governor, an Attorney-General, two Speakers of the House of Representatives, two Members of the Continental Congress, one United States Senator, and two Representatives in the Lower House bore the honored name of Arnold, while to Hon. Samuel G. Arnold belongs the monumental honor of having written the most valuable history of the State his ancestors aided in founding. It is also noteworthy that Jonathan Arnold, a descendant, was the author of the Rhode Island Declaration of Independence.

adopted May 4, 1776. By a deed or memorandum from Mr. Williams, William Arnold became a proprietor of the Providence Plantations, purchased by Mr. Williams from Canonicus, March 24, 1638. He was also one of the twelve first members of the Baptist church in Providence. His name also appears in a list of forty-one who subscribed to a plan of government by arbitration for the settlers at Providence, under date of July 27, 1640.

Although Mr. Blackstone and the Arnolds hold priority of settlement on Rhode Island soil, the former in 1634, and the latter, April 20, 1636,—the honor of founding Providence and Providence Plantations will always be accorded to Mr. Roger Williams. Mr. Williams and his wife embarked on the ship "Lion," from Bristol, England, December 1, 1630, and landed at Boston, February 5, 1631. Governor Winthrop, on the event of his landing, calls him "a godly minister." William Harris, a co-founder of Providence, was a passenger on the same ship, came to Providence as a companion of Mr. Williams and for forty-five years acted a conspicuous part in town and colony affairs. For five years Mr. Williams was engaged in teaching, preaching and manual labor at Boston, Plymouth and Salem. Of those years and Mr. Williams' attitude and relations to the Massachusetts Bay Colony, we shall speak in another chapter.

On September 3, 1635, the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony ordered Mr. Roger Williams to depart "out of this jurisdiction within six weeks nexte ensuing, whch if hee neglect to pforme, it shalbe lawfull for the gounr & two of the magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to returne any more without licence from the Court." Later in the autumn Mr. Williams obtained permission to extend the time that he might remain in the Colony at Salem, but his activities so disturbed the peace of the community, that a pinnace was preparing to deport Mr. Williams. In a letter to Major Mason, dated Providence, 22 June, 1670, Mr. Williams wrote:

"First when I was unkindly and unchristianly (as I believe) driven from my house & land & wife & children (in the midst of N. Engl. winter now about 35 years past) at Salem; that ever honrd Gov. Mr. Winthrop privately wrote to me to steer my course to the Nahiganset Bay & Indians, for many high and public ends, encouraging me from the freeenes of the place from any English claims or pattents."

Leaving Salem, Massachusetts, in January, 1636, he travelled southward toward the Bay. How and where he spent the balance of the winter months is open to conjecture. Thirty-five years after his banishment, he wrote: "I was sorely tossed for over fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean." The best authorities

believe that he found shelter and Indian fare and welcome in the wigwam of Massassoit at Sowams, now Barrington. If so, an excellent chance was offered him to learn the customs, character and language of the Wampanoags of which tribe Massassoit was the chief Sachem. In 1677 Mr. Williams wrote: "My soul's desire was to do the natives good and to that end to have their language (which I afterward printed), and therefore desired not to be troubled with English company." For Indian missionary work, no better preparatory school could be found than the homes and the intercourse with a friendly tribe.

Mr. Williams was not an idler, and the approach of spring invited him to the soil as the source of his sustenance. What more natural thing could he do than to plant an early garden of Indian corn, beans and squashes on the banks of the Ten Mile River, on land safely within Massassoit's ownership. Here were soil, sun and protection. It may be safely assumed that at this time Mr. Williams was in the midst of master doubts as to his future work; shall he establish a mission, found a town or return to England. A little family of a wife and two children in Salem is the force that holds him in the service of his fellows in America. As the spring opens into summer, the knowledge of his whereabouts brings to his log hut in Seekonk, a few young fellows, full of adventure, who prefer the chances of the free wilderness with Mr. Williams as their leader to the severe discipline of life in the Bay Colony. Of this company, he wrote in 1677: "Yet out of Pity, I gave leave to W. Harris, then poor and destitute, to come along in my company. I consented to John Smith, Miller, at Dorchester (banished also) to go with me, and at John Smith's desire, to a poor young fellow, Francis Wicks, as also to a lad of Richard Watermans. These are all I remember." It is not easy to see how Mr. Williams could have forgotten Joshua Verin, one of the six who crossed the Seekonk to find shelter under the western slope of Moshassuck Hill. He it was, who, his next door neighbor on the north, vexed his soul to its depths, and to whom he bequeathed the title of wife-whipper. The "lad of Richard Waterman's" was no less than Thomas Angell, for whom Angell Street is named, next to Waterman Street, bearing the name of his patron. In the midst of spring planting and house building, with his little group of migrants assisting, a messenger from Plymouth greets Mr. Williams with a written message from Gov. Winslow. The letter informs him, that while he is on the lands of the Wampanoags, he is making a settlement within the Plymouth Patent, on the western limits of Pokanoket. Gov. Winslow, the diplomat, tells Mr. Williams that Plymouth Colony does not wish to incur the displeasure of the Bay Colony, by harboring a banished citizen of that government, and advises him, in a friendly spirit, to cross the Seekonk to neutral territory.

Mr. Williams had already been advised by his loving friend, Gov. Winthrop to betake himself to the Narragansett country, but as was his habit of mind, he often sought counsel and then took the opposite course, a common practice of self-willed men. Winslow's motive was to preserve peace between the two Colonies on Massachusetts Bay. Winthrop's was to use Mr. Williams as an agent of the Bay to ally the Narragansetts with that Colony and make that tribe a strong helper in vanquishing their pronounced foe, the Pequots, living in the Thames Valley of Connecticut.

Mr. Williams was a man who saw visions and dreamed dreams. To-day he defies the Bay Colony as to banishment, holding firmly to priestly pre-eminence, and the supremacy of "a distressed conscience." Yesterday, he was inspired to enter the field of Indian missions, to-morrow, he will plan a Colony of "distressed consciences" *a la* Williams. The day following, he will go into the wilderness—alone. On the banks of the Ten Mile River on that June morning, year 1636, Mr. Williams awakes to the realities of a pioneer life. The mission dream dissolves in the clear air of a summer morning. A winter in the "smoke hole" of a savage wigwam, and the remembrance of a wife and two babies, have scattered "such stuff as dreams are made of." That new Colony of "distressed consciences" must have had a distressful outlook, as he saw in his entourage only four young fellows, whom he characterizes as "poor and destitute." Possibly the coats on their backs and a few bits of peag in their pockets constituted the present earthly wealth of all. Literally, "the world was all before them, where to choose their place of rest, and Providence their guide." Mr. Williams' sole purpose now is to secure a place of safety for himself and family and the young men who have sought his aid. Historian Arnold says: "That it was not the intention of Roger Williams, in seeking a refuge in the wilderness, to become the founder of a State, his own declaration proves." His "soul's desire to do the natives good" is now resolved into an effort to find some shelter for himself and his little band and food for their support. Fortunately the summer sun is maturing the early and later berries and wild fruits, the waters are well stocked with fish, and the sand banks of the "great salt cove" supply, on demand, with little labor, the luscious, fattened bivalves, now known the world around, as Rhode Island clams and oysters.

When, how and with whom, Mr. Williams crossed to the west shore of the Seekonk and how he was received are matters of conjecture, not recorded in history. Certainly, the most entertaining story of the settlement of Providence by Mr. Williams is told by Mr. Charles T. Miller, in his illustrated monograph, with very happy artistic work by Mr. Walter F. Brown, 1874. The first three verses of this poetic satire may create a desire to read and relish the whole.

"Did you ever hear the story told,  
Of Roger Williams, the preacher bold,  
That settled this State in the days of old,—  
This little State of Rhode Island.

"In sixteen hundred thirty-six,  
Roger Williams got into a fix  
By saucing the Governor of Massachusetts,  
And skedaddled away to Rhode Island.

"He crossed as everybody knew,  
Seekonk River in a birch canoe;  
Just to save the tolls that were due  
On the bridges above and below him."

"The earliest tradition," "the date has not been accurately ascertained," "it is a matter of conjecture," "this interpretation," "it is possible," "the theories," "meagre records," "unauthenticated copy of a deposition," are the staple introductions to all the probable or improbable stories of that water journey. The only certain thing is that he made it safely and by some good providence, an Indian guide or other leadership. Mr. Williams found a resting place on the east bank of the Moshassuck with one or more companions. Foster says one, Thomas Angell; Moses Brown, Knowles and Staples say five; Arnold in 1859, names four, while the Providence City Seal of 1845, had four men in the boat; that of 1861, had six, and the present official seal has three in all. Our readers have a broad range for sustaining an unimportant fact.

The "What Cheer, Netop" story rests on what United States Senator Foster heard told by "the Honorable Stephen Hopkins, Esq., whose sister married James Angell," etc., etc. By this story, it seems that Roger Williams did not land on the west shore of Seekonk River. "No other person except the said Thomas Angell being then in company with him" (Roger Williams). That when they came opposite the cove now called *What Cheer Cove*, they were hailed from the shore by one of the Indians, who understood a little English, by the friendly salutation of "*What Cheer*," from which circumstance the Cove has ever since been called What Cheer Cove, so named in the early records of the town; that Mr. Williams made signs to the Indians that he would meet them on the western shore of the neck of land, on which they (the Indians) then were; going himself in the canoe by water, round Fox Point, which he accordingly did and met the Indians at the famous Rock and Spring, mentioned by Gov. Hutchinson in his History of Massachusetts—a little southwestwardly from the Episcopal Church." The Foster-Hopkins-Angell testimony dissipates the landing of Mr. Williams at Slate or What Cheer Rock, on the bank of the Seekonk, reduces the company of settlers of the latest arrivals on the Plantation to Mr. Williams and his one servant, Thomas

Angell, and, strangest of all, transfers the famous Rock from What Cheer Cove to a place near the Spring, "a little southwesterly" from St. John's Church. William Blackstone at Study Hill, William and Benedict Arnold and William Carpenter at Pawtuxet, hold priority of occupation of the Plantations.

For a period of nearly two years, we are in blissful ignorance of affairs at Providence except as revealed by letters of Mr. Williams to Gov. Winthrop. There are no public records for this period at least, and those we have as to community affairs bear no dates, though referring in the main to matters subsequent to Mr. Williams' purchase of lands of Canonicus. March 24, 1638. Each student of Providence history is at liberty to interpret this period of silence as his judgment may dictate. Our own view is that after Mr. Williams had prepared a comfortable cabin near the spring, on the hillside, he brought his family to the new settlement in which he was a squatter settler, with those who came with or followed him. It is not probable that Mr. Williams had approached his "kind friend," Canonicus for the purchase of lands until he had become well satisfied that a settlement could be made on this Indian territory safely, nor until a sufficient number of people had joined him to constitute a defensible town.

The settlement was early named "New Providence" by Mr. Williams in recognition of a divine guidance in his banishment. It was not a mission, for neither Mr. Williams or his associates bore the semblance of missionaries. They owned no lands, they had no form of civil government. All were poor; all but Mr. Williams had scant education. All were adventurers in a new land, under an untried and an inexperienced leader. Of the outcome, they were blindly ignorant; the wisest alone knew. Faith, a kind of blind faith in "Fate," "A Divinity that shapes our ends," was the binding force of these pioneer planters.

Mr. Williams believed that settlers on Indian lands should first obtain their titles by purchase of the Indians. He had asserted that doctrine in the Bay Colony. Consistency compels obedience to the principle at Providence. The Crown title to all newly discovered lands occupied by savages was a negligible factor to Mr. Williams, until he met Mr. Samuel Gorton in a wordy duel over English Crown rights, which the latter gallantly defended. But Indian lands were common or tribal properties, not individual ownership in fee simple. Socialism was a principle of wide application among savage tribes. The Chief Sachem could sell parts or the whole of the tribal lands, but it is to be assumed that their subscription to Indian transfers carried with it a communal rather than an absolute fee. In most of the original purchases by the whites of Indian land, it is doubtful whether there was a full contract, such a meeting of minds as a property contract requires. As late as March, 1638, Mr. Wil-

liams did not own a foot of land at Moshassuck, neither did his associates. All looked to him to secure the title to lands for which twenty months delay must have made them clamorous. The Arnolds, Carpenter and Harris had located at Pawtuxet on the fertile lands at the mouth of the Pocasset. All others were engaged in impatient but "watchful waiting" on Mr. Williams.

Our theory is that Mr. Williams had not then decided on making a permanent home at Providence. Uncertainty rested on all points and lines of outlook. He was poor, too poor to buy or settle a township of land. His associates were poor. The doors of Boston and Plymouth were closed against their return, when an unexpected hope cheers the Providence men. Boston has again decided to deport a large body of its most valuable citizens—more than three hundred. Was it chance that led William Coddington and John Clarke to visit Mr. Williams at Providence in the early spring of 1638, to advise with him where these banished families should set up their new standards and build new homes? Who knows what plans had been secretly forming between the two classes of men, who had won the displeasure of the Bay Colony. A real, an unrecorded force led to a recorded fact. The Boston Colony decides to purchase Aquidneck and settle it, and Mr. Williams decides to purchase the Plantations and settle there. Contracts are entered into with the Narragansett Sachems. As to general bounds of lands for both settlements and the terms of sale Mr. Williams writes both deeds, or memoranda, and both are executed, on March 24, 1638, at Narragansett, the headquarters of the tribe. Mr. Williams carries in his hands the purchase price of Aquidneck and in consideration therefor receives a free gift of Providence Plantations from his kind friends Canonicus and Miantonomi. The problem of Providence is solved. Doubt yields to certainty and the Plantations become a physical entity by the following Memorandum:

At Nanhiggansic the 24th of the first month, commonly called March, in ye second yeare of our Plantation, or planting at Mooshausic or Providence, MEMORANDUM, that we, Canonicus & Miantunomi, the two chief sachems of Nanhiggansick, having two years since, sold unto Roger Williams, ye lands & meadows upon the two fresh rivers called Mooshansic & Wanaskuetucket, doe now by these presents, establish and confirme ye bounds of those lands, from ye river and fields at Pautuckqut, ye great hill of Notquonchanet, on ye northwest, & the town of Maushapauge on ye west.

As also in consideration of the many kindnesses & servies he hath continually done for us, both with our friends at Massachusetts, as also at Quinnickieutt, & Apaum or Plymouth, we do freely give unto him, all that land from these rivers, reaching to Pawtuxet River, as also the

grass & meadows upon ye said Pawtuxet River. In writing whereof we have hereunto set our hands.

Ye Mark of (XX) Cannouicus.  
Ye Mark of (XX) Miantonomi.

In the presence of—

The Mark of (XX) Yotash.  
The Mark of (XX) Assotemuwit.

This memorandum of an agreement between the Narragansett Sachems and Mr. Williams indicates in a loose fashion the bounds of Providence Plantations as understood by Mr. Williams. Whatever rights in lands or their uses were intended to be conveyed by it, in a legal sense, only a life estate was created and a bright real estate conveyancer could have purchased the fee-tail and ousted all the proprietors, at the death of Mr. Williams. Mr. Henry C. Dorr remarks as to this so-called deed: "The first memorandum was prepared without such legal advice as Mr. Williams might have obtained. \* \* \* But Williams had an obstinate will and an irritable temper, and was very impatient of opposition. As we shall see in several instances hereafter, so on this occasion, Williams as was his wont, took counsel with no one, even when the rights of others were affected by his action. He ventured alone into the wilderness and the Indian stronghold at Narragansett, and secured such a title as his own unaided foresight determined." A second memorandum follows the first, written on the same sheet of paper, and is in the hand-writing of Thomas James.

1639. Memorandum, 3 mo., 9th day.

This was all again confirmed by Miantonomi; he acknowledged this his act and hand, up the streams of Pawtucket and Pawtuxet without limits, we might have for our use of cattle.

Witnesses hereof:

Roger Williams.  
Benedict Arnold.

The second memorandum has no legal value in that it does not show the signature of Miantonomi, who was the sagamore and not the Chief of the tribe. Still more, it seems to convey only the usufruct of the territory, as it stated in the term, "We might have for our use of cattle." Judge Staples considers this second memorandum a declaration of the bounds of the first and an enlargement of the area of the grant, attributing its faulty statement to Mr. Williams' ignorance of law, "rendering it doubtful that he ever studied under the strictly technical Coke."

It would be a great satisfaction to know precisely what these memoranda meant to the Indians. Mr. Williams may or may not have explained the full significance of an English deed or gift. If he did not, then Can-

onicus transferred only a joint communal life title to the Plantations. The clause "we might have for the our use of cattle"—that is for tenant-at-will pasturage—seems to mean so much and no more. Subsequent debates with the Indians and land troubles between Mr. Williams and his associates, point to this interpretation by the Indians of all the memoranda gives, according to Indian land tenure rights and policy. How far the misunderstanding as to Indian titles and the consequent apparent trespasses of whites on aboriginal rights had to do with the Indian wars, is a matter worthy of larger and later consideration.

On the 24th of March, 1638, Mr. Williams canoed to Narragansett, a poor man. He returned with a gift of "Providence Plantations," affirmed by the signs of Canonicus and Miantonomi. This property Mr. Williams regarded his own, the consideration had passed from him, and it was his purpose to exercise absolute personal control of it and to use his own judgment as to the persons who should be admitted as sharers of his possessions, and, by land ownership, become freemen and voters in the new settlement. Mr. Williams' claim of sole ownership was disputed by the leading settlers, who had already joined Mr. Williams as sharers with him of good or ill fortune. William Harris, a fellow passenger of Mr. Williams on the ship "Lion," and, as Mr. Williams stated, a fellow companion in the settlement of Moshassuck, was a man of iron will and more purposeful than his senior associate. He, Harris, maintained for himself and the others who had joined Mr. Williams in his venture that they constituted a joint partnership and that the good fortune that the Narragansett Sachem had conferred was a mutual grant for all.

In 1677, Mr. Williams wrote a full statement of his purchase of the lands and the reason for changing his plan as to his individual ownership. "As to my selling to them Pawtuxet and Providence: It is not true that I was such a fool to sell either of them, especially as W. H. (arris) saith, 'like an Halter in a Market who gives most.' The truth in the Holy Presence of the Lord is this: Wm. H.(arris) Pretending Religion, wearied me with desires, that I should admit him and others into fellowship of my purchase. I yielded and agreed that the place should be for such as were destitute (especially for Conscience Sake) and that each person so admitted should pay 30/- country pay, towards a town stock, and myself have £30 towards my charges which I have had £28 in broken parcels in 5 years. Pawtuxet I parted with at a small addition to Providence (for then that monstrous bound or business of upstream without limits was not thought of). Wm. Harris and the first 12 were restless for Pawtuxet and I parted with it upon the same terms, viz., for the supply of the destitute, and I had a cow of them (then dear)

when these 12 men (out of pretence of conscience & my desire of peace) had gotten the power out of my hands, etc., etc."

Thus began a land war between Mr. Williams on the one hand and Mr. Harris and associate settlers on the other, that continued between the two chiefs for more than forty years until both were in their graves, and the final issues even only settled in English land courts forty years after their death.

In this contention as to the rightful ownership of the Plantations, through the deed given to Mr. Williams, March 24, 1638, and 1639, he was within his legal rights. He held the title and could have made his associates his vassals, obedient to his demands. But the truth was that the settlers at Providence, with the exception of the Arnolds and Carpenters, were Mr. Williams' personal followers, who had agreed with him to share his fortunes, while dependent upon him for protection from the Indians, and for securing titles to Indian lands, as he alone knew enough of the Indian language to treat with them on business affairs. As Mr. Williams had denied and in the Bay Colony had defied the English Crown rights to lands occupied by the Indians, he was, as he believed, in full ownership of thousands of acres of lands and of all possible present and future values of the maritime ports and of Providence as a commercial center. "They were mine own as truly as any man's coat on his back." R. W. And this claim, as is manifest, set at naught all laws and claims of England as to the Nation's rights in newly discovered lands.

"Wearied," as he says by the demands of William Harris and others, Mr. Williams consented to the formation of a land copartnership or proprietary which should include all the territory included in his purchase. The following undated paper sometimes called "The Initial Deed," is evidence of the transfer:

Memorandum, that I, R. W., having formerly purchased of Canonicus and Miantonomi, this our situation or plantation of New Providence, viz., the two fresh rivers Woonas. and Moosh. and the grounds and meadows thereupon, in consideration of £30 received from the inhabitants of said place, do freely and fully, pass, grant and make over equal rights and power of enjoying and disposing the same grounds and lands unto my loving friends and neighbors, S. W., W. A., T. J., R. C., J. G., J. T., W. H., W. C., T. O., F. W., R. W. and E. H., and such others as the major part of us shall admit into the same fellowship of vote with us. As also I do freely make and pass over equal right and power of enjoying and disposing the said land and ground reaching from the aforesaid rivers unto the great river Pawtuxet, with the grass and meadow thereupon, which was so lately given and granted by the aforesaid Sachems to me. Witness my hand.  
R. W.

This memorandum—scarcely that—had no legal value in that it is undated, the names of the grantor and grantees are only indicated by

initials, their residences are omitted, and the transfer is not witnessed nor is Mrs. Williams' signature attached. Yet by this "scrap of paper," Mr. Williams transferred twelve-thirteenths of his purchase to the initial persons, and by their consent and agreement the thirteen became a council to determine who might own lands, enter into the Fellowship and become voters in the Proprietary established hereby. The names of the persons indicated by the initials were Stukeley Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, and Ezekiel Holyman.

In 1661 a committee was appointed by the town to procure from Mr. Williams a proper deed of the first purchase. In this paper Mr. Williams sets forth such facts as his memory contained as to the purchase and sale, naming only seven of the original twelve proprietors, and adding the names of Chad Brown, William Field, Thomas Harris, Sr., William Wickenden, Robert Williams and Gregory Dexter. This deed bears the full name of Roger Williams and the mark of his wife, Mary. It is dated Dec. 20, 1661, and is witnessed by Thomas Smith and Joseph Carpenter. Another paper given by Mr. Williams under date of Providence, 22, 10 mo., 1666, reaffirms the transfer to the twelve associate proprietors, and bears date, in the title, of "8 of 8th month, 1638, so called." It adds this explanatory paragraph:

This paper and writing given by me about twenty-eight years since, and differs not a little, only so is dated as near as we could guess about the time, and the manner of the men written in the straight of time and haste are here explained by me.

This memorandum was witnessed by John Brown, John Sayles, and Thomas Harris, assistant.

We have reached an important point in the affairs of the settlement at Providence, when the chief settlers, thirteen in number, assume the ownership and control of the lands of Providence Plantations, and the civil functions pertaining to a COLONIAL PROPRIETORSHIP, sometimes called a town. The leading facts of this chapter are these:

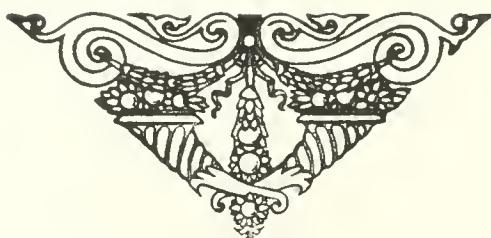
1. William Blackstone was the first white settler on the territory of Rhode Island, in 1634.
2. William and Benedict Arnold arrived at Providence, then Indian Moshassuck, April 20, 1636.
3. Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts Bay Colony, September, 1635.
4. Roger Williams spent "14 weeks" in the wilderness, from an early date of 1636, probably with Massasoit, at Sowams.

5. Mr. Williams began a settlement at Seekonk in the spring of 1636, but, in obedience to orders of Gov. Winslow of Plymouth, crossed the Seekonk River and landed at Moshassuck, now Providence.

6. On March 24, 1638, Mr. Williams in consideration of kindnesses and gifts, received from Canonicus, Chief Sachem of the Wampanoags, a gift of land between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet Rivers.

7. At a later period, date unknown, on demand of certain settlers, Mr. Williams transfers to twelve associates a joint ownership in the lands conveyed to him and thereby established a Colonial Proprietorship.

8. The events of this chapter begin in 1624 and end prior to 1640.



## CHAPTER VII

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ROGER WILLIAMS IN NARRAGANSETT BAY COLONY



## CHAPTER VII.

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The magnitude of a state as a political unity is measured by the idealism of the founders, the institutions established, and the practical outcome of both in the welfare of the whole community. Two separate foundations appear in the early story of the State of Rhode Island.

The first was PROVIDENCE, at the north end of Narragansett Bay with its harbor on Providence River. As Roger Williams bore a conspicuous part in the settling of Providence, and as his principles and civil policy had much to do in determining its operations, he may justly be called its founder.

The second was THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND on the Island of Aquidneck at the south end of the Bay, with the town of Newport as its commercial centre. As Dr. John Clarke was the chosen leader of the settlement, and acted for nearly forty years as the chief representative of its purposes and workings, he may be justly styled its founder. In this and the succeeding chapters it is proper to give a careful review of the lives of the two men and the leading characteristics of the two Colonial organizations, separated, geographically, as widely as the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies, but more widely divergent in the principles and details of Colonial life.

Concerning the birth of Roger Williams, there is a great doubt as to time and place. Mr. Straus is authority for the statement that he was the son of James Williams, a merchant tailor of London, and his wife Alice, and was born in 1607. Dr. Dexter fixes the date at 1603. Dr. Guild fixes his birth year, 1602, and others as early as 1599. Felt, the ecclesiastical historian of New England, says Roger was the son of William Williams of South Wales, and was born in 1606. That he attended the "Charter House School" and Pembroke College in 1624 is attested by Mr. Straus. Under date of 1629, the Charter House School records have this entry: "*Roger Williams who hath exhibition (a benefice) and so far about five years past, hath forsaken the University and is become discontinuer of his studies there. Exhibition suspended until order to the contrary.*"

There are absolutely no records as to the subjects studied by young Williams, then eighteen years old, his class rank, his graduation from school or college and his theological preparation for the ministry. Late in life, he wrote, "From my childhood, now about three score years, the father of lights and mercies touched my soul with a love for himself, to

his only begotten, the true Lord Jesus, to his holy Scriptures, etc." Student life usually goes unrecorded, unless romance or recklessness breaks its monotony, but as neither appears in the life of Williams, we are left to useless conjecture.

The first real break in the cloud of obscurity hanging low over Mr. Williams' early life, is the record that he embarked with his wife, Mary, in the ship Lion, Captain Pierce, master, December 1, 1630, and after a stormy voyage of sixty-five days, arrived off Nantasket, February 5, 1631. Gov. Winthrop spoke of him on his arrival at Boston, "as a Godly minister." Mr. Wilson, minister of the First Church, was about to sail for London and the Church invited Mr. Williams to supply his place during his absence, which he declined, on the ground of conscience, because they were "*an unseparated people*." Such a reply from a young minister, condemning the attitude of the Puritan Church was not calculated to win friends, but, the rather, to arouse prejudice, and when in April, the Church at Salem had invited Mr. Williams to be their teacher, the Court of the Bay wrote to Mr. Endicott, advising cautious action, inasmuch as the candidate had refused to serve the Boston Church because of its non-separation and also because he had broached novel opinions, "that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence as it was a breach of the first table." It is of special importance to note that the Salem Church had not separated from the English Church and that Mr. Williams sought to succeed Rev. Francis Higginson, who had on sailing to New England expressed the tenderest affection for "dear England" and "the Church of God in England."

It is certain that Mr. Williams was not ordained at Salem, in 1631. Hubbard says that the Church "for the present, forbore proceeding with him." It is certain that he was at Plymouth, in the autumn of 1631, where he taught as an assistant to the Rev. Ralph Smith. On a visit of Gov. Winthrop to Plymouth in 1634, he was called on to decide a matter which was creating disturbance, inasmuch as Smith and Williams declared that it was unlawful to apply the title "*Goodman*" to any *unregenerate* man. Cotton Mather tells us that Gov. Winthrop declared it both proper and lawful and constantly in use in England, in courts and elsewhere, and he adds, "And that speech of Mr. Winthrop's put a lasting stop to the Little, Idle, Whimsical Conceits, then beginning to grow obstreperous."

While at Plymouth, Mr. Williams supported himself by manual labor, as he says, "day and night, at home and abroad, on the land and water, at the How (hoe) and at the oare for bread." Here he made the acquaintance of Massasoit and began the study of the Indian language, the result of which appeared in his "*Key into the Language of America*,

etc.," published in London, in 1643. This work was a valuable contribution on the tongue of the Algonquins and gave Mr. Williams the friendly regard of the native tribes which continued till Philip's War. His first child, Mary, was born while he was at Plymouth.

Gov. Bradford, in his history of Plymouth, wrote:

Mr. Roger Williams (a man godly and zealous, having many precious parts, but very unsettled in Judgmente) came over first to ye Massachusetts, but upon some discontente left yt place and came hither (wher he was friendly entertained, according to their poore abilitie) and exercised his gifts amongst them, and after some time was admitted a member of ye church; and his teaching well approved, for ye benefit whereof I still blesse God, and am thankfull to him, even for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs, so farr as they agreed with truth. He this year (1633) began to fall into some strange oppinions, and from opinion to practise, which caused some controversie between ye church and him, and in ye ende some discontente on his part, by occasion whereof he left them some thing abruptly, yet afterwards sued for his dismission to ye church of Salem which was granted, with some caution to them concerning him and what care they ought to have of him. But he soone fell into more things ther, both to their and the government's troble and disturbance. I shall not neede to name particulars, they are too well knowne now to all, though for a time the church here wente under some hard censure by his occasion, from some that afterwards smarted themselves. But he is to be pitied and prayed for, and so I shall leave ye matter and desire ye Lord to show him his errors and reduse him into the way of truth, and give him a settled Judgment and constancie in ye same; for I hope he belongs to ye Lord and yt he will shew him mercie.

We have here the verdict of the generous-minded, kind-hearted Governor Bradford, after an acquaintance with Mr. Williams of three years, as his fellow church member and religious teacher. After leaving Plymouth in the interim of 1634, we find Mr. Williams at Salem, and, according to Winthrop an assistant to Mr. Skelton, the minister of the Salem church. On the death of Mr. Skelton in August, 1634, the church called Mr. Williams to be their pastor, occupying that place less than one year. The leading member of his church was John Endicott, who held the offices of Deputy Governor or Governor of the Bay Colony from 1641 to 1665. It was the same Endicott who had packed off the Browns to England, on the same ship on which they came, because they assumed the airs of Episcopalians; the same Endicott who joined with Mr. Williams in the demand that women should not appear as worshippers in the Salem church without veils over their faces; the same Endicott that mutilated the British flag, by cutting out the Cross, on the ground that it savored of Roman Catholicism, for which public offense he was admonished by the General Court and disqualified for holding office for a year;

the same Endicott that persecuted Dr. John Clarke and his associates, because they were Baptists; the same Endicott that ordered the hanging of Mary Dyer and three other Quakers on Boston Common.

In December, 1634, soon after Mr. Williams' advent at Salem, he forwarded to Gov. Winthrop and the Assistants a treatise "wherein among other things he disputed their right to the lands they possessed here, and concluded that, claiming by the King's grant, they could have no title, nor otherwise, except they compounded with the natives." This was a revolutionary blow aimed directly at the life of the Colony. The royal title was the basis of the Patent of the Bay Company. To dispute its validity was an act of hostility to the Bay and of treason to the English throne, as he had not become a freeman in Massachusetts and was still a full English subject. Still more, King James was charged with "a solemn public lie" and also "with blasphemy for calling Europe Christendom, or the Christian World" and he personally applied to King Charles "these three places in the Revelation,"—damnable quotations. Such declarations from a minister at Salem, if allowed publicity, would create great dismay in the Colony and be treated as treasonable by the King. A hasty meeting of the General Court was called, to take action on these disloyal utterances. Mr. Endicott advised "dealing with Mr. Williams to retract the same." The outcome of the "dealing" was a submissive retraction of his position and offering his book or any part of it to be burned. By the advice of Reverend Messrs. Wilson and Cotton, it was agreed that upon his retraction or taking an oath of allegiance to the King it should be passed over. Mr. Williams retracted for a season.

With regard to the purchase of lands of the natives, Mr. Williams made no complaint as the Massachusetts Bay Colony instructed Governor Endicott of Salem, in 1629, to settle justly all claims the surviving Indians presented for the lands, of their tribes, occupied by the whites, much of the territory occupied by the first settlers had no Indian occupants. In some cases the Indians gave up their claims, refusing any compensation. History does not record a single act of occupation of Indian lands in the Plymouth or Bay Colonies without satisfactory agreements with the claimants.

In 1634, the Freeman's oath was enacted, but there is no evidence that he ever swore allegiance to King or Colony, as his name does not appear in the list of freemen. Another Roger Williams became a freeman in May, 1631.

The period between August, 1634, and October, 1635, records the events in the life of Mr. Williams, which result in his separation from the Bay Colony. He is now the minister of the Salem Church,—a Puritan Church still in outward fellowship with the Church of England.

Higginson, its first minister from 1628 to 1631, on leaving England saluted it as "the Dear Church of England" and the homeland "Dear England," from which they proposed no separation. They could not say "Farewell" to either.

According to Mr. Straus, Mr. Williams is now twenty-eight years of age and the Salem Church is his first pastorate, he being only an assistant at Plymouth. He seems to be in full and happy accord with John Endicott, the arch persecutor of Baptists and Quakers, who was said to be the chief deacon of his church and the most influential man at Salem,—the founder and father of the town. It was by his choice and acts that Mr. Williams became his minister and teacher and both move in harmony in affairs of church and state. With such a power in the pew, the young pastor feels the strength of his backing in the pulpit, and gave free reign to his "opinions," both civil and ecclesiastical. He seems to feel that he is now in a position to right all the wrongs of the social, civil and moral world as conceived by his fertile mind and sensitive conscience. Behind the Endicott bulwark he feels free to assail the King on his throne at Westminster and the innocent, unveiled women of Salem, and all degrees of authority between these two extremes. Let us consider some of the "dyvers new & dangerous opinions" which our young teacher of the Gospel "divulged" at Salem, in the twelve-month period of his pastorate. The order of divulgation is not of consequence, nor does it appear by any records now in existence.

We have already spoken of his "treatise," written at Plymouth and "divulged" at Salem, relating to the King's Patent. Mr. Williams retracts,—the first and only time in his life,—and offers the manuscript to the flames. Whether burned or not, no record of its exact contents have been kept, but his retraction is soon withdrawn and he returns again to his attack on the Bay Patent, in teaching publicly against it and the great sin in claiming right to lands so granted. For this second offense against public safety and policy Mr. Williams was summoned before the General Court, but at the request of Rev. Mr. Cotton, civil prosecution was postponed, "till ourselves (the Churches) had dealt with him in a Church way, to convince him of his sinne." This proposal was approved and ministers and elders conferred with the Salem minister, without avail, in quieting his disloyal teaching. At the same time that Mr. Williams, not a freeman,—only a resident,—of the Colony was teaching his Church and the Salem people how wicked their Patent was, he was the owner of ten acres of this polluted, sin-stricken land, and owned a house and lot in Salem. His conscience did not prevail against personal ownership of the ill-gotten acres of the Bay Company, the jewel of consistency was lost in the greed for possession.

The General Court now found its very life in jeopardy from enemies near and remote, in Salem and in England. For self-protection, it adopted the "Resident's Oath," supplementary to the "Freeman's Oath." It required every man, above twenty-one years of age, not a freeman, resident within the jurisdiction for six months, to be obedient to the laws, to promote the peace and welfare of the plantation and to reveal any plots against it, which should come to his knowledge. There was nothing strange or unusual in "the Oath" of allegiance and obedience. It was a protective remedy for disobedience in that it authorized the Court to send any person out of the Patent who refused to make oath. This act pinches Mr. Williams. He has been in New England above four years and has not become a citizen. He is now teaching the people that the company has no legal rights to its lands under the Royal Patent of King Charles. The new oath requires him to swear obedience to Company and to Crown. He not only refuses compliance but "divulges a newe strange opinion that an officer of the Colony has no right to tender an oath to an *unregenerate person*," "thereby to have communion with a wicked in the worship of God, and cause him to take the name of God in vain." There is no other instance in history when the avoidance of a legal oath was based on such a pretext. Its logical conclusion is that the worse the man, the less his obligation to fealty. Under such a specious cloak, Mr. Williams sought to cover his own departure from duty, his short-comings and his opposition to the policy of the Bay Colony. Summoned before the General Court for the third time, Mr. Williams and his friend Mr. Endicott argued the matter. Mr. Endicott declared himself convinced of his error and retracted. The Court declared that he was "very clearly confuted," but Mr. Williams and most of his Church remained unconvinced of their error, although holding an opinion, under the protest of the Court, the magistrates and all the ministers of the several Puritan Churches. Gov. Winthrop tells us that "many, especially of devout women, did embrace his opinions."

It was probably at this time that Mr. Williams had a revelation, "that a man ought not to pray with the unregenerate, even though it be with his wife and child," and a further revelation was made that an unregenerate man could not pray in his own right and behalf, which placed the poor sinner in a bad fix, leaving him to be saved or damned according to the laws of foreordination and election. It takes a whole lot of philosophy, of historic credulity and Christian charity, in the attempt to harmonize such opinions as have been stated with the sanity of mind of a teacher of religious truth, even in the seventeenth century. Vagaries are vagaries in all centuries.

In the face of the acts and protests of the General Court and the min-

isters of the Bay Colony, Mr. Williams was ordained as pastor of the Salem Church, in June, 1635, while yet the relations between him and the Colony were unadjusted, and in defiance of the civil government. Such action of a young minister and his church could not go by unrebuked, and Mr. Williams was cited to appear before the General Court, July 8-18, 1635, to answer the following complaints as to his offensive teachings:

1. That the magistrates ought not to punish the breach of the first table, except when the civil peace should be endangered.
2. That an oath ought not to be tendered to an unregenerate man.
3. That a man ought not to pray with the unregenerate, even though it be with his wife and child.
4. That a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament, nor after meat.

Other events in the relations of calcitrant Salem and its ministers and the Bay Colony are hastening the issue which may result in a cleavage of Essex and Suffolk, of Boston from Salem. In addition to the lands held by the Salem Church and people a petition is before the Court for more of the land, tainted by an illusory Patent, as taught by Mr. Williams,—“the land betwixte the Clifte and the Forest Ryver, neere Marble Head.” Naturally, the Court laid the petition on the table until other important matters were settled. Mr. Williams felt the blow so severely that he retaliated by procuring the consent of the Salem Church to letters of admonition, written and sent by himself, in their name to all other churches of the Bay Colony, admonishing them of the “heinous sin” committed by their members, the magistrates, in withholding from Salem a large tract of land which Mr. Williams had declared was illegally owned.

The situation is peculiar. The land issue is a civil matter, cognizant by the General Court. No question of interest to the Salem Church is at stake. The town of Salem and the Bay Colony are the parties involved in the case. As an individual and a possible citizen of Salem, not a freeman of the Colony, Mr. Williams might justly have entered his protest. As a landowner and householder he might petition the General Court to reverse its decision. A wiser, a more prudent man and minister of religion would have thus proceeded. Not so, Mr. Williams. He aims to set the churches of the Bay Colony in an attitude hostile to the General Court, the ecclesiastical forces *vs.* the civil government.

The issue was now made. On the one side was the church of Salem and its young minister, scarcely thirty years of age; on the other were the Governor and Company of Massachusetts, nearly or quite five thousand English people, more than five hundred freemen settled in at least

twenty-five towns and villages, along the shores of Massachusetts Bay, from Ipswich on the north to Hingham on the south. No question of legal rights has been raised, there has been no interference with the individual conscience, there has been no demand for or restraint of civil or religious freedom. A Congregational minister has "dyvulgéd newe and strange opinions,"—opinions purely academic or absolutely without the province of the Colonists or the Churches to decide. The land title at issue must be referred to the justices of the King's Bench in England. The duties of magistrates and the taking of oaths are to be decided by the same high authority. As to the rights of regenerates and unregenerates, these may and can only be settled squarely and absolutely at the last Assize by the Final Judge of all the Earth. It may then be determined who are and who are not regenerates and the limitations and freedom of each. The labors of the Massachusetts clergy having been appealed to, were now directed towards Mr. Williams and his church. The result of such efforts was that a majority of the members of the Salem church left Mr. Williams and joined the loyal Colonists, while the minister held firmly to his position on all the matters at issue.

On Saturday, August 15-25, 1635, a terrific gale swept the New England Coast, the equal of which in the fury of the northeast wind, the immense downpour of rain, and the height of the ocean tides was never known before or since. Crops were destroyed, hundreds of thousands of forest trees were uprooted, ships foundered at sea, and houses were prostrated or unroofed. On the Sabbath morning of the 16th, a goodly congregation gathered by difficult and devious paths at the little Puritan meeting-house, but Mr. Williams was not in the pulpit and the Elder conducted the services, a part of which was the reading of a letter from the pastor, probably written during the storm of Saturday, while a storm of equal or greater intensity was raging in his own soul. Dr. Dexter has described the attitude of Mr. Williams: "It was a solemn protestation. He had made up his mind fully. He could hold communion with the churches of the Bay no longer. They were unclean by idolatrous pollutions. They were defiled with hypocrisy and worldliness. They needed cleansing from anti-Christian filthiness and communion with dead works, dead worship, dead persons in God's worship. They ought to loathe themselves for their abominations, and stinks in God's nostrils (as it pleaseth God's spirit to speak of false worships); for they were false worshippers of the true God, liable to God's sentence and plagues; guilty of spiritual drunkenness and whoredoms, of soul-sleep and soul-sickness in submitting to false churches, false ministry and false worship. They were ulcered and gangrened with obstinacy; their ministry was a false and a hireling ministry; their doctrines were corrupt; they were asleep in

abundant ignorance and negligence, in gross abomination and pollutions, which the choicest servants of God and most faithful witness of many truths were living in, more or less. And the breath of the Lord Jesus was sounding forth in him (a poor despised ram's horn) the blast, which in His own holy season should cast down the strength of all these inventions of men, in the worshipping of the true and living God." Solemnly, he gave his testimony against those churches; solemnly he separated from them as unworthy to be fellowshiped as true churches of the living God. He should communicate with them no more. And, further, he should communicate with *them* to whom his letter was addressed no more, unless they were prepared to follow whither now he led, and renounce communion with all other professing followers of God in the Massachusetts Colony.

The natural effect of such a letter was, as might be expected, to alienate a great body of the church from Mr. Williams, while "the whole church was grieved herewith." Morton says, "the more prudent and sober part of the Church, being amazed at his way, could not yield to him."

Mr. Williams never entered the Salem meeting-house again. He turned his back on all the churches of the Bay and all, including his own, turned their backs on him. Cotton Mather says, "His more considerate church, not yielding to those lewd proposals, he never would come to their assemblies any more; no, nor hold any communion in any exercise of religion with any person, so much as his own wife, that went unto their assemblies; but at the same time he kept a mutiny in his own house, whereto resorted such as he had infected with his extravagance." Mather adds, "which occasioned him for a season to withdraw communion in spiritual duties even from her (his wife) also, till at length he drew her to partake with him in the error of his way."

Mr. Williams' many and grievous offences against Church and State have now reached their climax and for a consideration of all and a verdict theron, he was summoned to appear before the General Court at its September Session, 1635. As the matters for judgment related to ecclesiastical questions, the ministers of the Bay, his peers, were invited to sit in the Council, most of whom were graduates of Cambridge University, England, and several were men of distinction in their profession. The Court of Inquiry was made up of the Governor, Deputy Governor, eight assistants and twenty-five Deputies from nine towns, with twelve clergymen, as an advisory body. Of this distinguished and historical body were Gov. John Haynes, a wealthy land-holder in Essex and later Governor of Connecticut; Deputy Governor Richard Bellingham, bred a lawyer, formerly Recorder of Boston, England, and thrice elected Governor of

the Bay; John Winthrop, once and again Governor of the Bay and the "loving friend" of Mr. Williams; William Coddington, treasurer of the Company and later a founder and Governor of the Colony of Rhode Island; Simon Bradstreet, later Governor of the Bay, and a man of great influence in the Colony; Thomas Dudley, later Governor; Increase Nowell, a man of family and education, an Assistant, an Elder and later Colonial Secretary; William Hutchinson, husband of Anne Hutchinson, a liberal in theology, later a founder of the Colony of Rhode Island; William Brenton, also a liberal, a Deputy and a founder of the Colony of Rhode Island; Capt. John Mason, the famous Indian fighter and conqueror of the Pequot tribe; Dr. George Alcock, Deacon of the Roxbury Church and ancestor of A. Bronson Alcott; Rev. John Wilson and Rev. John Cotton, the ministers of the Boston Church,—one liberal, the other severely orthodox; John Eliot, the apostle to the Indians; Thomas Welde, an active opponent of Mr. Williams; Thomas Jamies, the pastor at Charlestown; Thomas Hooker, pastor at Cambridge, later the leader and founder of the Colony at Hartford, and others whose names are familiar in Massachusetts history. Before such a remarkable body of men, the leaders in Church and State, learned in law, in theology, and in civil government, the chosen protectors of the rights of the people, all practical separatists from the Church of England, all nominally Puritans in all essentials of belief and practice, the trial took place. For intellectual ability, sterling integrity, honest-mindedness and moral worth the Court that tried Mr. Williams was preeminent in Colonial history. The extremes of Puritan theology were equally represented,—the liberal in Cotton, Hutchinson, Preston, Coddington and Hooker,—the conservative in Wilson, Welde, Dudley, Bradstreet and Winthrop. It was a jury qualified to decide, with equal justice, questions of law, civil government and theological dogma, and the trial was conducted with a calmness, a moderation and a decorum, somewhat extraordinary in an age of small charity for offenders and of bitter invective towards opponents. Justice, tempered by a spirit of friendship towards Mr. Williams, guided in this council of wise and learned men, summoned to act at a critical period on grave questions. Knowles, a biographer of Mr. Williams, says: "It is due to the principal actors in these scenes, to record the fact, of which ample evidence exists, that personal animosity had little, if any, share in producing the sentence of banishment. Towards Mr. Williams, as a Christian and a minister, there was a general sentiment of respect."

The General Court met in the rude meeting-house, at Newtown (Cambridge), on Thursday, October 8, 1635. As town and church were one, the meetings for affairs secular and religious were held under the same roof. A large amount of general business of the Company and

Colony was first attended to. One of the orders was "that John Smyth shalbe sent within theis 6 weekes out of this jurisdiction, for dyvers dangerous opinions, wch hee holdeth and hath divulged. If in the meantime he removes not himself out of this Plantacion." This was the John Smith, who came to Providence with Mr. Williams, of whom he wrote, "I consented to John Smith, miller at Dorchester (banished also), to go with me, and at John Smith's desire, to a poor young fellow, Francis Wickes as also to a lad of Richard Waterman's."

Later in the day Mr. Williams' case was called and all of the offences charged were recited. When asked if he was ready to satisfy the Court on these matters, he justified his letters and opinions and refused to retract or withdraw either. To the suggestion of the Court that he might have more time for reflection, he replied that he chose "to discuss presently," and so the hearing or debate began, the Court appointing Rev. Thomas Hooker to answer Mr. Williams and endeavor to show him his errors. A glimpse is given us of the proceedings, as revealed by Rev. John Cotton, the liberal teacher at Boston. He writes, Mr. Williams complained to the Court, "that he was wronged by a slanderous report up and down the countrey, as if he did hold it to be unlawfull for a father to call upon his child to eat his meat. Our reverend brother, Mr. Hooker (the Pastor of the church where the Court was then kept), being moved to speak a word to it, 'Why,' saithe he, 'you will say as much again (if you stand to your own Principles) or be forced to say nothing.' When Mr. Williams was confident he should never say it, Mr. Hooker replyed, 'If it be unlawfull to call an unregenerate person to take an Oath, or to Pray, as being actions of God's worship, then it is unlawfull for your unregenerate childe to pray for a blessing upon his own meate. If it be unlawfull for him to pray for a blessing upon his meate, it is unlawfull for him to eat it, for it is sanctified by prayer, and without prayer unsanctified (1 Tim. IV: 4, 5). If it be unlawfull for him to eate it, it is unlawfull for you to call upon him to eate it, for it is unlawfull for you to call upon him to sinne.' Here Mr. Williams thought better to hold his peace than to give Answer."

The Court adjourned on October 8, with the Williams case unfinished, to be resumed on the 9th. Arguments continued during the day and before evening were concluded, Mr. Williams still defending his positions. At the close the unanimous verdict of the General Court of the Bay Colony was rendered, reenforced by "all the ministers save one,"—that one being Rev. John Cotton of Boston. The sentence was as follows:

WHEREAS MR. ROGER WILLIAMS, ONE OF THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH OF SALEM, HATH BROACHED & DIVULGED DYVERS NEWE & DANGEROUS OPINIONS, AGAINST THE AUTHORITIE OF MAGISTRATES, AS ALSO WRITT

LIES OF DEFAMACON, BOTH OF THE MAGISTRATES & CHURCHES HERE, & THAT BEFORE ANY CONVICCON, & YET MAINTAINEH THE SAME WITHOUT RETRACCON, IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, THAT THE SAID MR. WILLIAMS SHALL DEPE OUT OF THIS JURISDICCON WITHIN SIXE WEEKES NOWE NEXTE ENSUING WCH IF HEE NEGLECT TO PFORME, IT SHALBE LAWFULL FOR THE GOUE & TWO OF THE MAGISTRATES TO SEND HIM TO SOME PLACE OUT OF THIS JURISDICCON, NOT TO RETURNE ANY MORE WITHOUT LICENSE FROM THE COURT.

Before sentence was declared, Gov. Haines, whom Mr. Williams called "that Heavenly man," summed up the charges, and Mr. Williams reported them as follows:

Mr. Williams said he holds forth these particulars:

FIRST, That we have not our land by Pattent from the King, but that the Natives are the true owners of it, and that we ought to repent of such a receiving it by Pattent.

SECONDLY, That it is not lawfull to call a wicked person to sweare, to pray, as being actions of God's worship.

THIRDLY, That it is not lawfull to heare any of the Ministers of the Parish Assemblies in England.

FOURTHLY, That the Civill Magistrates power extends only to the Bodies and Goods, and outward state of men, etc.

To this the Governor added, "Now I beseech you, brethren, marke them which cause diuisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye haue heard; and avoyd them." Rom. xvi, 17.

Mr. Williams had been a resident of New England since February 5, 1631, a period of four years, eight months and four days, between his arrival and the date of exile, the 9th of October, 1635. Three of these years were spent as a religious teacher at Plymouth and Salem, where he had toiled at the hoe and the oar during the whole of that period for the support of himself and family, which by the birth of two children, Mary and Freeborn, had increased to four persons. He had been a member of each of the churches in which he taught, but for some reason had not become a citizen of either Colony in which he resided and so far as appears took no interest in the civil concerns of either, except to criticise and malign. The people to whom he had come as an ordained minister of the Gospel are his own countrymen. They are, like him, newcomers to a new land and are struggling with new problems of State and Church. They are threatened with the loss of their Patent and holdings by secret and open enemies in England. The musket is their daily companion in the workfield, the forest and by the fireside. In every newcomer to the infant town, the Puritan leaders hope to find an added defender of their homes and hopes. Young Williams is welcomed by Gov. Winthrop as "a godly minister,—his wife as a godly helper. Fresh from school, ardent

and enthusiastic in the flush of opening manhood—not yet thirty years old,—he seems to his elders a young David, equipped to cope with the Goliaths of a strange land. He will surely support the Crown of which he is a subject and the Colonial government, which shelters and protects him. He will at once enter into its organic life as a citizen and loyally support its civil policy. He will consort with the reformed churches, and, as a religious teacher, enter into their communion and fellowship. He will sustain the magistrates in their official duties, and honor the men who protect the Christian Sabbath and the sanctity of an official oath. He will act the part of a wise leader and teacher of his own church and will labor for the peace and unity of all the brotherhood of churches. He will harbor no vagaries in thought or conduct and exercise no disputatious spirit in ecclesiastical or civil concerns. He will, in a single word be a model Christian teacher and citizen, fulfilling what he wrote, twenty years later to the town of Providence to quiet its restless lawlessness,—“There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination, or society. It hath fallen out sometimes that both Papists and Protestant, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship; upon which supposal I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience that I ever pleaded for, turns<sup>1</sup> upon these two hinges: That none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks be forced to come to the ship’s prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any. I further add, that I never denied, that notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship’s course, yea, and also command that justice, peace and sobriety be kept and practised, both among the seamen and all the passengers.”

Well said, Roger Williams, in 1635. From 1631 to 1636, you were both a seaman and a passenger on board two New England ships of state, the Plymouth and the Massachusetts Bay Colonies, sailing on uncharted seas for the port of universal freedom. The captains and the ship’s ruler, in no way, by force or compulsion, interfered with your freedom of conscience, of intellect or will. All that they asked was loyalty and the exercise of all the constructive forces you possessed to aid in bringing these ships safe to port. Dropping the figure, it can be safely said that Mr. Williams was absolutely out of harmony with the Puritan and Pilgrim Church and State in New England. While using at all times the privileges and freedom bestowed, his whole strength was spent intellectually in opposing law, and government, from the overthrow of the Patent to the denunciation of governors, ministers and churches, declaring all to be corrupt and the ministers of Satan. Magistrates are instructed that it

is unlawful to enforce Sunday laws and that it is unlawful and sinful to administer an official oath to "an unregenerate person." Christians are taught that it is a sin to pray with an "unregenerate" be it wife or child, and that it is a sin to call an "unregenerate," a "Goodman," or for a woman to go, unveiled, to church. He approves the mutilation of the British flag, and buys and builds on the sin-tainted land of the Bay Company. He leaves the church at Plymouth "abruptly," and the Salem church in a fit of anger. During the whole period Mr. Williams has made no complaint of any interference with his freedom of conscience or of worship, and there was no occasion, so far as the records show, he did not utter a word in defence of the doctrine of soul liberty in Massachusetts. His "opinions" seem the careless thinking of an opinionate man, whose mind assumes the disputatious attitude and who chooses the field of academic debate and dialectic criticism, in preference to the constructive and peaceful attitude of a Christian state-builder.

Mr. Williams has, in his own sober judgment, declared the verdict of the General Court just and warranted. In the latter part of 1655, already quoted in part, Mr. Williams continues:

If any of the seamen refuse to perform their service, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help, in person or purse, towards the common charges or defence; if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation; if any shall mutiny and rise up against their commanders and officers; if any should preach or write that there ought to be no commanders or officers, because all are equal in Christ; therefore no masters nor officers, no laws, nor orders, no corrections nor punishments; I say, I never denied, but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel, and punish such transgressors, according to their deserts and merits.

Mr. Williams stands self-condemned.

A single sentence may embody the history of Mr. Williams in the Plymouth and Bay Colonies from February 1, 1631, to February 1, 1636. He came to Boston, a Puritan clergyman; he attacked, denounced and renounced the whole Puritan Church and ministry; he attacked and denounced the Bay State Patent; he declared against the civil oath and the civil magistracy; he refused to join the civil society, whose protection he enjoyed; he counselled acts of disloyalty in mutilating the British flag; his acts and teaching tended to disturb and disrupt the Bay Colony, to discredit its authority, and to destroy the life of the Bay Colony by some catastrophe, at home or in England. John Quincy Adams declared the teaching and influence of Roger Williams in Massachusetts "wholly revolutionary." The expulsion of Mr. Williams saved the Colony from

social, civil and religious disorganization and overthrow. Individualism set itself boldly and insistantly against the Colonial life. In such an issue the event was necessary, logical, conclusive.

The decision of the General Court of the Bay was rendered on October 9-19, 1635. The six weeks' stay granted Mr. Williams terminated on Friday, 20-30 November. The illness of Mr. Williams and the arrival of a Williams' baby caused a reasonable delay in the departure, and in view of these and other circumstances the authorities gave him leave to stay in Salem until spring (1636), on condition that he should not "go about to draw others to his opinions." About this time Gov. Winthrop wrote him "to steer his course to the Nahigonset Bay and Indians, for many high and heavenly and publike ends, encouraging me from the free-nes of the place from any English claims or pattents." Recovery from illness and the tonic of winter days aroused in Mr. Williams the unrestrained spirit of preaching his "opinions" on Bay matters to such as came to his house, so that above twenty persons had joined his cause. Lest the spirit of disloyalty should gain greater strength, Governor Haines and the Assistants, in council, decided to send Mr. Williams back to England by ship lying at Nantasket, ready to sail. Mr. Williams was summoned to Boston, by warrant, but, feigning sickness, did not go. Capt. John Underhill was sent to Salem with a pinnace to take Mr. Williams to the ship at Nantasket, but was advised that the sick man had been gone three days. Mr. Williams arrived in Boston, February, 1631. His flight from Salem occurred in January, 1636.

Mr. Williams was not a student of civil government. That was not the burning question of the day. Debate on religious matters, forms, creeds, abstract interpretations, was the occupation of the learned of both clergy and laity. Foreordination, election, reprobation, the real presence, free grace, perseverance, were questions of church, camp and court. Democracy, the freedom of the common man, in affairs civil and religious, was little studied and less understood. The Puritan was a patriot, but not a democrat. The Puritan Church-State was ecclesiastical authority. The Puritan State-Church was civil domination of soul estates. Macaulay says that "The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion." The passionate worshippers of freedom of that day, Cromwell called heathen. John Loeke (1632-1704), was the first of moderns to define civil government, soul liberty, conscience liberty, and to show how both might harmonize in a civil state. Still there were men in Western Europe who had a clear vision of human rights,—who understood the true value of soul liberty,—who, through severe persecution, had made measure of their faith in the freedom of body and soul. The Pilgrim Separatists were of this class. So were the

Baptists. Even the liberal Puritan stood for freedom in personal rights, in civil concerns and in faith. The Bible was his guide and interpreter in things temporal and in things spiritual. Samuel Gorton, one of the founders of Warwick, writing of himself says, "*I yearned for a country where I could be free to worship God according to what the Bible taught me, as God enabled me to understand it. I left my native country (England) to enjoy liberty of conscience in respect to faith toward God and for no other end.*"

Of great Englishmen standing in the forefront in defence of civil and soul freedom were John Hampden, gentleman, Sir Harry Vane, scholar, Oliver Cromwell, statesman and soldier. These great souls were types of the great historic life, in which they were leaders, in the contest for soul liberty on English soil.

It is but justice to Mr. Williams to say that he had had no experience in affairs of government and that his ideas of freedom, at this time, tended towards a broad and defiant license. Twenty years later we find him championing obedience to government and a just regard for the opinions and faiths of others. Still further, the indecision, the uncertainty, the change of mental attitude, the angry moods, the inconstancy and inconsistencies of Mr. Williams' early life in the Bay and at Providence were undoubtedly due to temper and temperament, to a dogmatic egotism and vanity, to a spirit naturally disputatious, under the general exercise of a generous nature, a self-sacrificing spirit, and a soul that harbored no revenges. The greatest handicap to Mr. Williams' true position in history, however, has been the attitude of his biographers and apologists, who, persistently, and in the presence of the clearest contradictory evidence, have maintained his primacy as a leader in civil and soul liberty. This position Mr. Williams never claimed for himself, has been maintained for purely partisan purposes, and is yielding gradually to the claims of historic truth.

Another hindrance to the understanding of Mr. Williams has been the misinterpretation of a phrase, so often used by him, "distressed consciences," and like terms. Such words mean to-day a state of mind growing out of opposition to existing conditions, institutions or laws. Socialists have "distressed consciences" as to capitalism; single taxers are "distressed in conscience" over present methods of taxation. Prohibitionists have "distressed consciences" over alcoholism. Women suffragists are "distressed in conscience" that they are not possessed of the ballot. A man leaves his boarding house with "a distressed conscience" gendered by stale bread and vegetable hash. No law, order, custom or tradition of the Bay touched Mr. Williams or his followers in the restraint of their individual freedom, at any point, civil, political, social

or religious. Their civil and religious liberty was absolute, because they could not compel the government of the Bay, its churches and magistrates to adopt their "opinions," their "distressed consciences" led some of them to join Mr. Williams at New Providence. Hence the Colony of Providence Plantations.

Mr. Williams is now at the age of twenty-nine, an exile from the Bay and a wanderer. Alone in the wilderness, he goes forth, not as a missionary nor as a state founder, but to find a place of safety for himself and family. His short stay at Seekonk attests his mental uncertainty as to motive and situation. Obedience to authority, not a crowning quality of Mr. Williams, leads him to cross the Seekonk and plant his standard on the banks of the Moshassuck. Two years of startling silence is only broken by the arrival of a few adventurers, poor in purse, "distressed in conscience," and the restlessness of the squatter company for lands and other unexplored blessings,—two years of doubt and great perplexity to Mr. Williams. During this period Mr. Williams has made no sign as to motive or method. Early in the spring of 1638, a faint light penetrates the heavy darkness. It may be the precursor of dawn at Moshassuck. A whole colony of families, banished from the Bay, seek Mr. Williams' advice as to a place of settlement. Aquidneck is chosen, and Mr. Williams is made the intermediary for a deed from Canonicus to Coddington.

Mr. Williams now sees the way open for his own associates at Providence and on the 24th of March, 1638, the deeds of Moshassuck and Aquidneck are signed at Narragansett, and the land foundations established for two settlements.





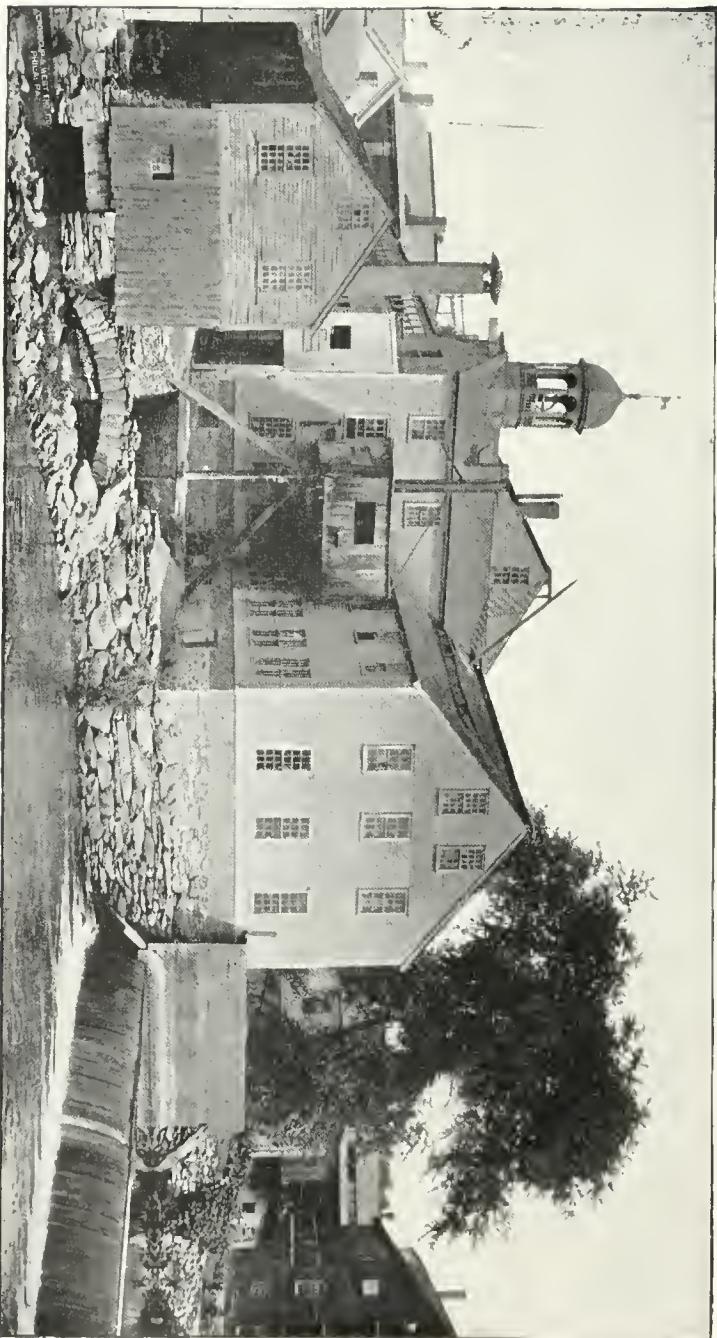
## CHAPTER VIII

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PROVIDENCE—IT'S BEGINNING







OLD SLATER MILL, PAWTUCKET, BUILT 1793

## CHAPTER VIII. PROVIDENCE—IT'S BEGINNING.

Providence is located at the junction of the Pawtucket, the Moshassuck, and the Woonasquatucket rivers, which after their union, and the influx of the waters of the Pawtuxet, flow into what was known by Miantonomi, the Narragansetts and Wampanoags, as Sowams Bay. This bay was the upper part of what is now known as Narragansett Bay, lying to the north of Prudence Island, and east of the territory of Shawomet, or Warwick. In the deed of Warwick, by Miantonomi to Samuel Gorton and others, January, 1643, the eastern bound, from north to south was "Sowhomes (Sowams) Bay." The Indian name of Providence was Moshassuck, from the name of the river, which has its headwaters near Lime Rock, in the town of Lincoln, Rhode Island. Moshassuck was a part of the territory owned by the Narragansett tribes, but no part of the present town was occupied as an Indian village. At one time, there was a village at Mashapaug and another on the Pawtucket River, near the present location of Saylesville, between Quinsnicket and the river. The first white man of record to traverse the Moshassuck territory was William Blackstone, who, leaving Boston in 1634, took up lands along the Pawtucket River, at the present village of Lonsdale, calling his new home "Study Hill."

In April, 1636, William Arnold, his son Benedict, son-in-law William Carpenter, crossed the wilderness country between Massachusetts Bay and the Narragansett, explored the lands at Moshassuck and settled at the mouth of the Pawtuxet River, on the north bank, now in the town of Cranston. This party consisted of William Arnold and Christian, his wife, his daughter Elizabeth, and her husband, William Carpenter, a son Benedict, a daughter Joanna, and a son Stephen,—seven persons in all,—the youngest son being a sturdy lad of fourteen years. These pioneers planted, cultivated and harvested the first white man's crops within the limits of ancient Moshassuck. The Arnolds built their cabins and were the first squatter sovereigns on the lands later called Providence. It is believed that Thomas Hopkins and sister Frances were of the Arnold group that "sat down" at Pawtuxet Falls, in April, 1636. They came to stay and stayed and were the first to evidence the work of town building, to wit: clearing the forests, building cabins and fences, platting land, and making the acquaintance of their near neighbors, the Showamets, across the Pawtuxet, whose cornfields were in sight from the Arnold homes. Here one sees the practical founders of a town,—men and

women who came as freemen, not under banishment, who saw in the choice lands along the bay and river their ideal location for homes, in the soil and the waters of the bay and river, sources of physical support and possible wealth and, in their neighborhood, other attractive sites for homes and later, a plantation. Zachariah Rhodes, of Rehoboth, soon settled at Pawtuxet and married Joanna Arnold. William Harris, William Field, and Stukeley Westcott join the Pawtuxet Colony and so, by individual and family units, the founding goes on in the Pawtuxet country, an integral part of early Providence. Here is in raising a future Governor, Benedict Arnold, who for nine years, by two separate intervals, is the chosen leader of the people, dying in office at the age of sixty-three,—“one of the judicious advisors of the Colony.”

In June, 1636, Roger Williams crossed what was then the Pawtucket River to Moshassuck, having been advised by Gov. Edward Winslow, of Plymouth Colony, that his proposed plantation on the Seekonk (Ten Mile) River was in that Colony and that he would not be permitted to make his permanent home therein. The reasons for Mr. Williams' departure from Massachusetts Colony and his search for a new home are related in another chapter of this History. A careful study of all the records of the crossing of the Pawtucket River enable us to state with accuracy that four persons were companions in the canoe, with Mr. Williams. Their names were: “*John Smith*, the miller, of Dorchester, also banished,” *William Harris*, “then poor and destitute,” *Francis Wickes*, and *Thomas Angell*. Joshua Verin, of Salem, may have been one of the party, but it is not probable, although he states in 1650, “You cannot but Rem[ember] that we six which cam first should have the first Convenience,” as to lots. Mr. Williams, writing in 1677, is the authority for the four persons named,—“*These are all I remember.*” It seems that, as Mr. Williams and his companions were rowing their canoe down the Pawtucket River, they were hailed from the Moshassuck shore by an Indian, with the friendly salutation, “*What cheer,*”—a contemporary English greeting,—from which circumstance the Cove north of India Point, was called, “What Cheer Cove.” Mr. Williams made signs to the Indians on the shore that he would meet them on the western side of the neck of land which terminates in India and Fox Points, and kept on his course, without landing, until passing around Fox Point, and rowing up the Moshassuck River, he landed near the famous spring on the west shore of the peninsula, about a mile above Fox Point. Concerning the salutation, Mr. Williams says, “What cheare Netop is the generall salutation of all English towards them, *Netop* is friend, *Netompaug*, friends. They are exceedingly delighted with salutations in their own language.” In regard for and in memory of the friendly Indian greeting to Mr. Wil-

liams, six acres of land were laid out as the site of the Indian welcome and called "WHAT CHEER." This property with another lot at Sassafras Hill Mr. Williams sold to James Ellis, on the 7th of November, 1657.

Of the four persons who accompanied Roger Williams to Providence we have scant early records. Thomas Angell was born in England in 1618 and was reputed to be the family servant of Mr. Williams, before and after coming to Providence. He married Alice ——, and was the father of eight children. His oldest son John was born in 1646, and married Ruth Field, daughter of John Field.

William Harris was born about 1610, came to Boston in the ship "Lyon," from Bristol, England, in February, 1631, in the company of his brother, Thomas and Roger Williams. He married Susannah —— and had five children, Andrew, born 1635, Mary, Susannah, Howlong and Toleration. William Harris joined the Pawtuxet company and settled on the PAWTUXET PURCHASE, of October, 1638.

John Smith, the miller, was born in 1595, the date of his coming to Boston is not known. He married Alice —— and had two children, John and Elizabeth. He was banished from Boston, in 1635, for "divers dangerous opinions," and Mr. Williams accepted him as a companion of his exile. He died in 1648, leaving his mill rights and properties to his son John, who was town clerk of Providence from 1672 to 1677. John, Jr. died in 1682, leaving a widow and ten children.

Of Francis Wickes or Weeks, little is known. Mr. Williams wrote that "at John Smith's desire" he consented "to a poor young fellow, Francis Wicks." His name appears in the petition to join the town fellowship with an "X" against his name. It also appears in the "Combination" of 1640, under his mark. Wickes was assigned a home lot on the "Towne Street," north of Star street.

Moshassuck was not a paradise for pioneers. It was a wilderness. The woods were inhabited with wild animals, common in southern New England. Wild birds, large and small, abounded, and the fresh and salt rivers were alive with fish of many kinds. Most of the land was covered with a primeval forest growth of the usual types of trees and under-growth, as already noted. The hill contour embraced heights less than 200 feet above the sea level, with the exception of Neutakonkanut, which is now 299 feet high. The peninsula of Moshassuck, between the river of the same name and the Pawtucket River, was, as now, about two miles wide, and was covered with heavy timber and inhabited by bear, deer, foxes and other native animals and birds. Toekwotton Hill occupied the southeastern section and Fox Hill the southwestern of this peninsula, while the hill known as Moshassuck, beginning its ascent at Mile End

Cove, near Fox Hill, rose to the height of 180 feet, gradually descended to be marked by a lower crown called Stampers Hill, in its northwest shoulder and ascending again on the northeast to the height of 200 feet on Beacon Hill, continues its elevation north, towards and reaching Pawtucket Falls. The whole length of this long range of hills was about five miles. East of Moshassuck Hill, for three miles, lay a swampy wilderness, through which ran a sluggish brook, which fed Mile End Cove at Fox Point, with fresh water,—the Cove itself being at the level of tidewater.

It was to this Moshassuck peninsula that Roger Williams was drawn by the Indian welcome, "What Cheer," on that June day of 1636, and as a spring of good water was the first requisite of a place of settlement, he was led by his trusty guides to disembark on the east bank of the Moshassuck River, directly under the crown of Moshassuck Hill. Roger Williams' spring, from which he first drank on landing, is a living witness and a land-mark of the event. Looking west from the spring, the pilgrims saw a body of water, a mile across, into which two small rivers were pouring fresh water and silt from the hills, north and west. This water they called the "Cove." The river at his feet was the Moshassuck, flowing from the north. The western river was the Woonasquatucket,—from whence he knew not, while the broad water cove before him was bounded on the north by a bluff and sandy hill, and on the west by salt marshes and sandy hills, the lands above being concealed in forests on the upper slopes. To the southwest, separated from the peninsula by a tidewater ford of five hundred feet, was a hill which the Indians called Weybosset, and later Mr. Williams was told that beyond that hill was Weybosset Plains, and to the south from the Weybosset peninsula, stretched the Pequot trail into the Narragansett country, not very far to the south.

Mr. Williams is a stranger in a strange land. He has chosen to be an exile in an Indian wilderness rather than be deported to his native land, in disgrace. His choice was a wise one, aided as it was by the advice of Governor John Winthrop of the Bay Colony, who suggested the Narragansett Indians as a fair mission field for one of his benevolent and Christian ambitions. To this little company, "The world was all before them, where to choose their place of rest, and Providence their guide." No dream nor thought of founding a town had occupied the mind or imagination of Mr. Williams. He sought a place of refuge from the Bay, not lands nor a permanent home. Arnold says, "It was not the intention of Roger Williams, in seeking a refuge in the wilderness to become the founder of a state." Mr. Williams witnesses the same conclusion in a letter written in 1677:

My soul's desire was to do the natives good, and to that end to have their language, (which I afterwards printed,) and therefore desired not to be troubled with English company, yet out of pity I gave leave to William Harris, then poor and destitute to come along in my company. I consented to John Smith, miller at Dorchester, (banished also,) to go with me, and at John Smith's desire, to a poor young fellow, Francis Wickes, as also to a lad of Richard Waterman's. These are all I remember.

His "soul's desire" was a noble one. Had he followed it, he would have anticipated the splendid work of the Indian apostle, John Eliot, by ten years and won the Narragansetts and the Wampanoags to become the followers of the teacher of Nazareth. Mr. Williams was a man of attractive personality. Aside from his polemic spirit, which did not appear in his relations with the natives, his manners were sympathetic, courteous, independent. His contact and quite intimate acquaintance with the Wampanoags of Plymouth Colony and their distinguished sachem, Massasoit of Sowams, had awakened in Mr. Williams a genuine love for a simple, trusting people, and his student habits had aroused in him the purpose to know them in and through their language, the key to the mysteries of aboriginal life. The winter months of 1636, spent in the wigwam of Massasoit at Sowams (Barrington), had strengthened the intent of Mr. Williams "to do the natives good," and his first place of sojourn, on Massasoit's lands, and near the sachem, is complete evidence of his firm plan to be an active agent in civilizing and Christianizing the nearby savage peoples. The removal from Seekonk to Moshassuck on the advice of Governor Winslow of Plymouth, in the early summer months of 1636, did not turn him aside from his chosen mission. On the contrary, it opened a great, wide, an effectual door for its accomplishment on a larger scale, as it brought him into the limits of and close contact with the strongest, the richest, the most influential tribe of Indians in New England, whose chief sachems, Canonicus and Miantonomi, were known, respected and feared throughout the land.

It was a great day for Roger Williams when, with four companions, he rested at the spring on the banks of the Moshassuck. Freed from the land of bondage, the Bay Colony, and also from the surveillance of its obedient ally, Plymouth, he was a freeman in reality, in the land of the free, without the bounds of the Lord Bishops of his native land and the Lord Priests of the Colonies. It is probable that he brought with him in his canoe, across the Pawtucket, an axe, a mattock, and a spade. He was the first granger on the Moshassuck peninsula, with William Blackstone as a granger neighbor at the north, and the Arnold-Carpenter-Hopkins company as far away at the south, none of whom had he ever known. We shall never know with certainty the first steps taken at

Moshassuck by the men and lads who had built and planted on the north bank of the Ten Mile River. Let us assume that they repeated the work of April and May, in felling trees, hewing logs, and building a log cabin and in planting corn and whatever other seeds their Indian neighborhood furnished. We must remember that Mr. Williams was a poor man, and that like his poor companions, he worked in building the cabin for shelter, in preparing the soil for planting and in digging clams, catching fish and in preparing corn and Indian food products for daily consumption. It is probable that Mr. Williams knew the sachems of the Narragansetts at the time of his coming to Moshassuck, in 1636. The welcome from What Cheer Rock, on the west bank of the Pawtucket, may however have been the introductory salute of the tribal messenger to their future benefactor. At least, it was the beginning of a series of events that mightily affected the interests of all the New England Colonies. Before entering upon the relations of Mr. Williams to the Narragansetts, in whose territory he finds himself a dweller, we need to consider the probable course of action of the men of his company who had families, as did he. The single room log cabins of the pioneer days were not equal to the accommodation of more than one family. Smith, the miller, and Harris, the lawyer and financier, must look out for their own. The former found a mill-site for a corn mill less than a quarter of a mile away and located house and mill,—one building probably,—on the west bank of the Moshassuck, at the falls. Harris, with a keen scent for property trails, surveys all the lands and waters and, leaving Mr. Williams and the two lads to their Moshassuck clearing, locates on the Pawtuxet, and selects the rich meadow and planting lands of the Pocasset Valley. He finds the Arnolds at Pawtuxet Falls and between them there grew up a business alliance, which shaped the later history of Providence in a marked degree. We may assume, without fear of contradiction, that, with the approach of the December days of 1636, there were five log cabins, with big stone fire places and ovens, on the lands between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet Rivers, each inhabited by a family with two or more children, whose future was the warp and woof of early and later Providence history,—the Arnolds, Carpenters, Harris, Smiths and Williams. The support of a family in a wilderness is a problem of no small social magnitude in these later times, but in the first half of the seventeenth century, far apart from the meagre markets of Boston, Plymouth and Hartford, the task would seem almost insurmountable, but in reality it was an easy one. The log houses were small, containing but one room below, and one under the roof, reached by a ladder. The hewn side of a log, mounted on legs, furnished seats. Two or three logs, fitted together and made fast to the logs of the cabin, formed a table. Beds of leaves,

of straw and later of feathers made comfortable places for rest and sleep. Wood was at the door at the cost of cutting and a blazing wood fire was a blessed comfort for the long winter days and nights. Indian corn, beans and squashes, the products of fruitful gardens and fields, were stored away in the autumn, for the winter use, while dried berries added sauce for foods. But the all-bountiful supply of meats of wild game, animals, wild birds, ducks and geese, was more than equalled by the bounties of the sea and the sandy shores, never refusing to give to men of their abundance of healthy and life-prolonging foods.

A great deal has been written of "Soul and Liberty" and of "The First Baptist Church in America." And while almost everybody knows something about these and other matters of public concern, very few know in what sort of homes these men and their wives and children lived, what were their furnishings, what they ate and drank, what clothes they wore, how they traveled and dozens of other things which made life worth the living in this old town, nigh on to three hundred years ago. The dark curtain of mystery hangs between us and our Pilgrim and Puritan ancestors, who in their times and ways helped to make life more than tolerable in the city and State to-day. Let us see if we can draw aside the veil and look in upon the homes and lives of the people of Providence, who lived on "Ye Towne Streete," about the year 1640, A. D., while yet the flag of Great Britain floated from the flagstaff on Stampers Hill, and Charles the First still wore his head above his shoulders in the Parliament House on the banks of the Thames, in London.

The first houses in which the families lived were log cabins, built of logs hewn with axes and halved together at the corners, something as cob-houses are made by children. These cabins may have been about twenty feet square, containing but one room and roofed with logs or poles as rafters, covered with bark of trees or thatch. A chimney, if the rude cabin had one, was either built of logs or stones and plastered with clay. In the summer, cooking was done out of doors, under the trees, and the food was eaten from the vessels in which it was cooked, the family sitting around on logs or on the ground. These rude huts had no floors or windows, and the beds were often the small branches of evergreen trees. "Going to bed," was simply lying down on the soft side of the foliage of trees without removing the clothing, but adding blankets or the skins of animals in cold weather. It was not an uncommon thing for ten or more persons, men, women and children, with a dog or two and a sprinkling of cats and maybe a pig, sleeping in the one room of a log cabin, on a cold winter's night.

But the log cabins did not last many years, for soon came framed houses, which contained one room, called the "fire room," and a "chamber"

above, under the roof, reached by a ladder or rude stairs, like a long step-ladder. One end of the room was taken up by a huge stone chimney with an oven for baking on one side of the enormous fire-place. These fire-places were often four feet high, six feet wide and three feet deep, accommodating logs and fire-wood, four feet long. The single door was wide to allow the entrance of logs and large wood for the great fire on the stone floor of the fire-place, whose warmth reached the far corners of the great room, and whose cheerful blaze furnished all the light of the household until the advent of tallow candles, a luxury of the rich, to supplement the musical flame and the spectral shadows cast by it on the rude walls of the "fire room."

The one-room houses had one or two windows, for light and air, but in the absence of window glass, paper saturated with linseed oil was used; translucent, but not transparent. In windy and stormy weather the paper panes were protected by closed wooden door-shutters, fastened by hooks on the inside. Such windows were in use on Cape Cod as late as 1718.

The "fire room" was the living room of the whole family during the day, but at bedtime the older children mounted the ladder or stairs to the chamber, while the father and mother slept in the fire room, with the small children stowed away in the most comfortable places, inside or outside their parents' sleeping quarters. These may have been what Goldsmith describes: "The chest contrived a double debt to pay, a bed by night, a case of drawers by day." As the forests abounded in Rhode Island and the Providence hills were covered with heavy wood, there was no lack of fuel at cheap rates, and the "fire room" and "chamber" never lacked for heat, even in the coldest weather, even when ventilation was as perfect as open houses and chimneys could make it.

That we may see with our own eyes the working of a Rhode Island home of 1640, let us enter the house of Mr. Roger Williams, on "Ye Towne Streete," at the corner of Howland lane. It is near twelve o'clock noon, the old-time dinner hour. As we open the door, our nostrils are greeted and delighted with the fragrance of boiling clams. Mrs. Williams holds her baby, Mercy, on her left arm and is lifting the iron pot of boiled clams from the iron crane over the fire and placing it on the stone hearth. Mr. Williams is sitting on the long settee, with his two-year old boy, Providence, sitting on his lap, while Mary and Freeborn are playing at cats-cradles in the chimney corner. Mr. Williams welcomes us with a "God bless you, goodman Jones," as we enter, and Mrs. Williams has her cordial word of greeting, asking us to take a seat on a three-legged stool near the blazing fire. "A providential hour," says Mr. Williams, "God, in His great mercy, has granted us wonderful blessings in this new land of religious freedom, in a bountiful supply of clams and other fishes.

Let us thank Him before we dine." Standing before the kettle of clams, Mr. Williams asked the Heavenly Father's blessing on the rich provisions of His bounty in the wilderness, and then, lifting the pot of clams placed it on a long oak bench in the middle of the "fire room," and drew the settee in front of it for Mrs. Williams, himself and the children, while his guest sat opposite, astride the stool. On removing the cover, a luscious repast of clams, mussels, oysters and scallops, taken that morning by Mr. Williams from the cove banks at the mouth of the Moshassuck river. There is not a knife or fork in the house, and only a few wooden plates, on which the shell-fish are placed, when scooped from the pot by a long wooden spoon. The first course is clam broth, and all drink from the same source (the iron pot), using large clam shells for spoons. The clams now gratify and satisfy our appetites, each adult preparing his own dish, with a large loaf of Indian corn bread, from which each breaks the portion he desires. There is no butter, for there is not a cow or a goat in Providence Plantations. There is no tea or coffee, only the pure spring water from the great town spring, at the foot of the hill, and all drink to quench nature's normal thirst. Clams and bread and water,—water and bread and clams,—our table an oak bench, our dishes only wooden plates, our hands and fingers, the tools of our appetites,—a full, delightful meal and a grateful heart, followed by health and sleep, "of light digestion bred." This was a sample dinner at the home of the Founder of Providence, nearly three centuries ago.

Before we say "Good Bye" and "Thanks" for our dinner, let us note that there were no chairs in the room, no bedstead, no desk, no books, except a Bible, no tools, except an axe, a gun and a spade; no dishes, except wooden plates or trenchers, wooden spoons, and an iron pot; no carpet on the floor, but in its stead, sand from the river bank; no horse, no cart, and what was worse, no money to buy any or all of these things. Such was the home condition of Roger Williams and most of his band for a number of years after coming to Providence.

The fact is, each Providence family was its own mechanic, making the rude chests, tables, settees, bedsteads, and other furniture that stood on the sanded floors. Chairs were a luxury, and few families had more than one or two for more than fifty years from the founding. John Smith, the miller, who died in 1681, a man of note and property, having a two-room house, had "foure old chaires," value one shilling and six pence; three "bedstudis," "a chest with ye Booke of Marter's in it," 15 shillings; "An old Bible Some lost & some of it torne," 9 pence; "four old spoones," 1 shilling; two guns, 1 pound 1 shilling; "two spinning wheels & old cardes," 7 shillings; etc., etc. The total value of his household stuff was 11 pounds, 18 shillings and 6 pence, or about \$60.

The personal estate of William Harris, of Pawtuxet, valued January, 1681, gives two chairs, 1 shilling; 1 "bed studd," 3 shillings; 2 wheels, 4 shillings; 4 wooden platters, 1 shilling 6 pence; 6 trenchers, 4 pence; 2 brass kettles, 15 shillings; "2 barrills of winter sider with ye barrills," 16 shillings; "2 barrills of summer sider with ye barrills," 12 shillings; a warming pan, 3 shillings; "a saddle & stirrups, £1;" "A gray maare & a Coult running in pautuxett Woodes, £2, 10s.;" 1 young cow, 1 pound, 13 shillings; 1 old cow, 2 pounds, etc., etc.

John Whipple was an inn-keeper at the foot of Constitution Hill (died, 1685), and he had only "three chaires & a salt box," 1 shilling, 4 pence; 1 "Bed-stud," "7 pewter platters & trenchers;" and 1 "yoake of oxen," 6 pounds. The "wearing apparill" of the inventory was valued at 2 pounds. Volume IV of the Early Records of the town of Providence furnishes interesting reading for those who want to know more about the belongings of "City people," in Roger Williams' time.

In daily cooking over the wood fire on the blazing hearth the iron skillet for frying and the iron pot for boiling were the chief articles, and these came from across the sea as did the pewter plates and platters, the successors of the wooden trenchers, knives and spoons. Wood, iron, "puter" and brass articles are named in the family possessions, but not an article of silver or carved furniture before Philip's War (1675). For food, the first-comers ate of the bounties of nature as found in the wild game in the woods, the shell fish in marvelous abundance on the shores and the fin-fish in equal abundance in the rivers and Narragansett Bay. Deer were plentiful. In the summer, berries, grapes and wild fruits abounded in the woods and on the plains, and these fruits were preserved and dried for winter use. The Indians taught the Pilgrims how to plant corn and beans, dropping the kernels in the hill and adding a herring to fertilize it, after the shoots had come out of the ground.

For times of revelry a bowl of smoking-hot punch was mixed which added hilarity to the sombre Pilgrim life. Before Myles Standish went out on his Indian raid in Weymouth, he selected eight men and sought final inspiration in the bowl of whiskey punch.

" 'Twas on a dreary winter's eve, the night was closing dim,  
When old Myles Standish took the bowl and filled it to the brim;  
The little captain stood and stirred the posset with his sword,  
And all his sturdy men-at-arms were ranged about the board."

In Massachusetts, the early laws prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquors, and in 1667 cider was included, and strong measures were taken to keep strong drinks of all kinds from the Indians.

The first wine glasses of record in Providence belonged to John Crawford (died March 17, 1719) and to Gabriel Bernon (died February

1, 1736). John Crawford had "divers spoones, porringers, cuppes, pepper boxes and graters of silver," valued at thirty pounds, and many other luxuries for that day. (Dorr).

In Massachusetts, so early as 1638, the smoking of tobacco, then called "drinking" it, was forbidden on the highway, or out of doors within a mile of a dwelling house, or while at work in the fields.

In 1666, the General Assembly of the Colony "Ordered that no victualling house or victualler sell liquors without lycence from the Magistrate," etc., "and that none shall sell liquors on the first day (Sunday) to English Indians," etc. Most of the settlers, however brought with them across the sea, the vivid memories of the English ale-houses, and as soon as they could afford ale and beer or stronger liquors, they were in use by our Providence ancestors, and the ancient sideboard, with its store of family liquors, of which all partook more or less freely, was a part of the furnishing of the homes of ministers, officers, and people, as soon as conditions would allow. Total abstinence from liquors in Providence was at first a necessity. Their use was later a luxury, and later still they became a common beverage for the common people. This was the evolution of the drink-habit during the first century of Providence.

As to clothing of the settlers, what they wore and brought with them over the sea stood them in good stead for many a day, possibly in some cases as long as the forty-year wear of the shoes and blankets of the children of Israel in their desert wanderings. These old clothes were supplemented for winter use by the furs of the wild animals, fox, squirrel, deer and bear skins, that made warm and durable garments. As soon as flax could be raised and cured, linen thread wheels were brought from England to convert the material into thread and then came in the home made hand looms for weaving linen cloth for clothing, sheets, and table cloths. Dorr says there were a number of the spinning wheel looms in 1740, following the flax wheel after the introduction of sheep into the colonies, the date of which followed Philip's War, several years,—how many, we cannot state.

The first razor which came under the Court of Probate was owned by Stephen Harding, who died May 31, 1680. The fashion of wearing the beard was well nigh universal, which, with the long hair and broad-brimmed Pilgrim hat, gave a venerable air, even to youth. Razors did not come into common use until the eighteenth century, so that to picture Roger Williams and his associates with shaven faces is an artistic falsehood, which should be speedily corrected. Looking-glasses were not often in use in Providence before 1720 (Dorr), although Resolved Waterman had "a warming pan and a looking glass;" value, 12 shillings, in 1670. As glasses are essential to clean shaving, it is probable that our ancestors wore their hair and beard after nature's fashion for nearly a century.

Accustomed as we are to fine streets and fine country roads with every convenience and luxury of travel, by horse-drawn vehicles, by cars and automobiles, it is a difficult matter to picture this beautiful town and State covered with forests of heavy timber and only traversed by foot-paths or trails, first made by the Indians and afterwards adopted for use by the white people. These paths originally connected Indian settlements or villages and usually ran along the high and dry sections of land, avoiding water courses, except at easy fording places, where the water was shallow. These old trails were well-worn, as the Indians usually traveled in single file, on their journeys from place to place. Roger Williams and his six companions walked the old path from Plymouth to Sowams and thence to Seekonk in 1636. His party brought with them only the articles they or their Indian friends and guides could carry on their shoulders or backs. Moving heavy goods was impossible, except by water, and the carriage of light baggage for forty miles through the woods was no holiday affair. Mr. Williams tells us that he was tossed about for several months in the severe winter of 1636, "not knowing what bread or bed did mean." Wagons, carts, horses or oxen were not seen in the town of Providence for years after the settlement, and John Clawson's wheel-barrow (1661) is the first wheel vehicle we have record of. As the highways were only foot-paths through the woods, the usual method of travel was by log canoes and boats, fastened to shore supports by bolts and rings. It is said that in laying the foundation of the Franklin Building, on Market Square, about 1820, a rock was found with a ring and bolt attached, showing that the high water mark was originally as high as the east side of the Square. Mr. Williams usually went to his Prudence Island possessions and to his trading house at Wickford by sea, and on one of his voyages his canoe was upset, his goods lost, and he barely saved his life, (Dorr).

Considering the fact that Narragansett Bay with its tributaries was the main highway of the early settlers, and that most of the travel and transportation was by water, it was most fitting that the Assembly early adopted an anchor as the fit symbol of the Colony. As the people had no English coin, but only "cows, cattle, tobacco, and the like," to pay for goods, it is easy to see that a transfer of a bushel of corn to Newport or Boston by man-power, in payment for a cheese or a wheel-barrow, was a business transaction that was no "boy's play." Our town records do not tell us when the first roads were laid out and built, nor when cows, goats, pigs, oxen and horses were first imported into Rhode Island from the Bay State. It is believed that neat cattle came first and that the settlers raised their own oxen. Then came the home-made carts of a rude style and then the trails were widened to the width of the ox-cart.

In 1663 the old records tell of a "foote path" from the town of Providence to Pawtuxet. Later highways were ordered towards Pawtucket and Rehoboth and Blackstone and Louisquissuck (1682), but were not made until a later day. In fact North Main and South Main streets (The Towne Street) were not located until 1704, when it was ordered that it be "four poles wide." Even when highways began to be made and improved after Philip's War, gates and bars were erected at the entrance of different farms. Horseback riding was the first and for a long time the usual method of long distance for three generations from 1636. Madam Knight, in her journey to New York, traveling under escort of "The King's Post," was two days on the road from Boston to Providence, in 1704, while Mrs. Jacob Whitman, in 1760, relates that she left Danielson, Connecticut, on Tuesday and reached Providence, her home, at Turk's Head, Providence, Saturday afternoon of that week.

People who build towns and States are not bookish nor book-worms, and it is especially so in an age when books are few. The Pilgrims had few books and little time to read those they had. In the inventories of wills prior to 1710, eleven Bibles are enumerated. Thomas Walling had "Two bibles, two spinning wheels and one P of Cards," 14 shillings. (The cards were probably for carding wool). William Harris, of Pawtuxet, the scholar and polemic (died, 1681), left "1 Dixonarey," "The London Despencetorrey," "The Chirurgeons Mate," "Norwood's Triangles," "1 Bible," "Contemplations Morall and devine," and "A great Bible at Mary Burdin's house." The valuation of this large library was less than \$10. His daughter, Howlong Harris, had three books, "Cookes Comentarey upon Littleton, £1," "The Compleat Clarke, 8 s," and "The Touchstone of Wills, 2 s." Miss Harris also had for light reading, "Natur's Explication," "Ye treatise of Faith," and "ye effect of warr." For her gayer hours she had "Ye Gentleman Jockey," "Ye Gospell Preacher," "New England Memorial," "Ye Method of Phissich," and "A Short introduction of Ye Grammer."

One of Mr. Harris's books, styled "Lambathis Perambulations," had been loaned to Mr. Francis Brinley, of Newport, and "Severall bookees" had been loaned to John Whipple and to John Pocock.

Thomas Olney, Sr., had "Att the kitchen, one Bible," and "3 old pieces of Bible in ye Parlor," also "Ainsworthis Anotations, A Concordance & fishers Ashford Dispute," value, 1 pound, 16 shillings.

Benjamin Greene (1715) had "two Bibles, one Testament and one Hodders ARethmatick," value, 15 shillings.

James Andrew had "one Bible," 7 shillings; "a cradle" (10 s.), and "one Hogshead of Rum," 14 pounds.

Obadiah Browne (1716), "Seaunteene Cows," "two Bookes," "a paire of Silver Shoo buckles & eleven black dogs." The inventory covers five pages and is valued at £377.—The wealthiest man in the Colony, probably.

That such a life was of nature's ordaining was attested by the fertility of family life and the great longevity of many of the pioneers for several generations. John Smith, the miller, had two children, thirteen grandchildren and sixty-five great-grandchildren. Thomas Angell had eight children and forty-two grandchildren. William Harris had five children, sixteen grandchildren and about fifty great-grandchildren. William Arnold had four children, thirty-five grandchildren and one hundred and twenty-one great-grandchildren, with the issue of sixteen grandchildren not reported. William Carpenter had eight children and thirty-one grandchildren. Roger Williams had six children, thirty-one grandchildren and fifty-two great-grandchildren, with the issue of eighteen grandchildren not reported. And these six original families brought up thirty-three children, saw them, with few exceptions, married and the parents of one hundred and sixty-eight children. Here was vitality, virility and fertility, nourished and transmitted in the midst of early conditions and privations to which the poorest in modern days are strangers.

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth," as Jerusalem of old, was the Moshassuck country to which these early families had been led. At the head of a tidewater bay, with an ebb and flood of six feet, the lands bisected by a river, navigable to the "Cove" for vessels of six feet draught, near the influx of four fresh water rivers, whose flow from the unexplored hills, north and west, was constant and of great volume, the power of which was at once noted and put to practical use at Mooshassuck and Pawtuxet Falls, with forest lands of the finest timber, underlaid by deposits of bog iron ore, mines of lime and quarries of slate and granite, rich river bottoms for grazing and hay and salt grasses of certain annual productivity along the shores of tidewater,—these were some of the fortunate conditions that the new settlers found at Moshassuck and its environs. As clearings were made and surveys were carried on, it was found that a seven-hill town and city was prefigured in the contour of the Providence of a later day, for we have still with us, unlevelled by nature or art, Tockwotten, Prospect, Beacon, Constitution, Smith, Federal and Neutakonkanut, while Fox, Weybosset and Solitary Hills, of the founders' days now lie buried in the mud and sands of the early flats of the Cove, and Harbor. Beacon Hill, 200 feet in height, was so named because on its crest stood a tall pine, at least 80 feet in height, on the top of which, the United States Government, in an early day of the last

century, erected a huge tin beacon, easily visible from the Ocean, and used in triangulating and marking the southern New England coast lines. It's a pity that we have lost Moshassuck Hill, in name, even though the height still lives under the name of Prospect, a reminder of the beacon fires built on its summit in Revolutionary days. Smith, the miller, survives in Smith's Hill, which may later be lost in Capitol Hill, while Smith street will still perpetuate this most useful and ubiquitous name. Constitution Hill and Federal Hills are reminders of political events in State and Federal history, while Tockwotton and Neutakonkanut stand as permanent reminders of Indian days. Sassafras Hill, the name a French importation, will soon disappear in the nearby newly-made harbor lands, but the locality will always be pointed out as the dividing bound between ancient Providence and Pawtuxet of 1638. Broad Cove, Muddy Dock and the Muddy Cove have ceased to be in name and almost in memory, but we shall have with us, it is to be hoped to the latest period of Providence history, the names of Pawtucket, Pawtuxet, Moshassuck, Wonasquatucket, Mashapaug, Pocasset, Canonicus, Canonchet, Weybosset, Miantonomi, Niantic, Narragansett, Ninigret, Pequot, Pontiac, Pumgansett, Samoset, Seekonk, Stampers, and What Cheer, as memorials of a great and vanished race. At some unknown date, Mr. Williams recognizing a divine guidance to this remarkable section of New England, calls the lands on which he had located "NEW PROVIDENCE," and uses that name for a year or two, when we find his letters dated at "PROVIDENCE," a most appropriate name for a wonder-working experience and a providential deliverance. Later still, after the settlement at Warwick in 1643, these northern peoples unite in calling their lands "PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS."

Of the April (1636) immigrants, the first occupants of Providence, a clearer and fuller record may be made. William Arnold, the senior of the pilgrim party, was born in Dorset county, England, June 24, 1587, being in the sixth generation from Roger Arnold, of a distinguished English family. William (6) married Christian Peake (born 1583). Four children were born to them. Their first child, Elizabeth, born November 23, 1611, married William Carpenter. Benedict, born December 21, 1615, married, December 17, 1640, Damaris Westcott, who gave him nine children. William Arnold, wife and four children and son-in-law, William Carpenter, sailed from Dartmouth, England, May 1, and arrived in New England, June 24, 1635, going first to Hingham, Massachusetts, and coming to Moshassuck in the spring of 1636, arriving, as stated by Benedict Arnold, April 20, 1636. The Arnold family, including the son-in-law, William Carpenter, numbered seven persons. There are good reasons for stating that Thomas and Frances Hopkins, children of his sister Joanna, who married William Hopkins, were of the immigrant party.

A family census of Moshassuck and Pawtuxet, for September 1, 1636, would contain the following names, with dates of their arrival:

1. William Blackstone, 1634.
2. William Arnold, age 49, April 20, 1636.
3. Christian Arnold, wife of W. A., April 20, 1636.
4. William Carpenter, son-in-law, age about 28, April 20, 1636.
5. Elizabeth Carpenter, wife of W. C., 25, April 20, 1636.
6. Benedict Arnold, son of W. A., 21, April 20, 1636.
7. Joanna Arnold, daughter of W. A., 18, April 20, 1636.
8. Stephen Arnold, son of W. A., 14, April 20, 1636.
9. Thomas Hopkins, nephew of W. A., April 20, 1636.
10. Frances Hopkins, niece of W. A., April 20, 1636.
11. Roger Williams, 31, June, 1636.
12. Mary Williams (wife), June, 1636.
13. Mary Williams, daughter of R. W., 3, June, 1636.
14. Freeborn Williams, daughter of R. W., 1, June, 1636.
15. Thomas Angell, 18, June, 1636.
16. Francis Wickes, June, 1636.
17. John Smith, 41, June, 1636.
18. Alice Smith, wife of John, June, 1636.
19. John Smith, Jr., son of John, June, 1636.
20. Elizabeth Smith, daughter of John, June, 1636.
21. William Harris, 26, June, 1636.
22. Susannah Harris, wife of William, June, 1636.
23. Andrew Harris, son of W. H., June, 1636.
24. Joshua Verin, June, 1636.
25. Jane Verin, wife of Joshua, probably before September 1; date unknown.

Concerning the dates of arrival of other persons or families there are no public records. The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island, written with the most scrupulous and conscientious regard for truth and accuracy, is not an infallible guide. The dates of events at Providence, bearing the years 1636-7-8, should be examined with great care, as the early accounts bear no year dates. The date of the deed of Miantonomi to Roger Williams, March 24, 1638, is the first reliable public record at Providence. Every other admits of challenge for proof. It is full time that a halt be called on false dates and false and exaggerated statements as to Providence and Rhode Island history. The people want the truth. People, a policy and possessions constitute the founding of a town. Until March, 1638, the only element of founding a town at Moshassuck, rested in a colluvies of various opinionists, near one hundred in number, cabined in a wilderness, and waiting for some providential turn of the wheel of

fortune. Roger Williams is one of the group, without a fixed purpose or policy. As the best educated man of the body of scattered frontiersmen in a strange, new land, he is naturally looked to as "guide, philosopher and friend." He cultivates an acquaintance with the Narragansett chiefs and is promised lands, but does not gain possession. The people in and about Moshassuck want to own lands and build permanent homes, but two years slip by and no one holds a square foot of land as owner. Mr. Williams is a squatter on lands claimed by the English King, but really owned and occupied by the Indian tribe. Mr. Williams, in his letters to Gov. Winthrop, calls the place Providence, where he lives on the banks of the Moshassuck, on the west slope of Moshassuck Hill. The Arnolds and their neighbors call their place Pawtuxet, four miles to the south. The third planting time, in the spring of 1638, is near and the people become restless for land and they talk and say hard things about their needy condition and many blame Mr. Williams that, with a gift at his hands, he has not accepted it. He has told the people of the promised generosity of Miantonomi, but has delayed the acceptance of the promised lands. Why a delay of more than two years? We do not know exactly when the promise was made. We do know that Mr. Williams has done nothing in the way of ownership, and the consequent benefits to the people by a fair division of the lands has not occurred. The answer to that inquiry is not left wholly to conjecture, for the coming of Dr. John Clarke, William Coddington, and others to Moshassuck in the winter of 1637-8, helps to solve the problem, as discussed in another chapter. Our own opinion is that Mr. Williams lived for nearly two years in doubt as to his own course of action, until re-enforced by the strength, solidarity and unity of the new migration from Boston. When Dr. Clarke and his associates had decided to purchase Aquidneck, Mr. Williams felt secure in accepting the gift of lands at Moshassuck. Between Mr. Williams, the writer of the two documents, properly called MEMORANDUM in each instance, and Miantonomi and Canonicus, chiefs of the Narragansetts, two life estates were created, on March 24, 1638. The history of Providence and its people as the possessors of property, began on Saturday, the twenty-fourth day of March, 1638, nearly two years from the date of William Arnold's arrival. On that day, at Narragansett, near the present village of Wickford, in North Kingstown, Roger Williams met the two great sachems of the Narragansetts, Canonicus and Miantonomi, probably in the wigwam of the old chief. Mr. Williams had written two papers, each called a "Memorandum," to be signed by the two sachems, in the presence of witnesses.

One estate vested the great Island of Aquidneck in "Mr. Coddington and his friends united unto him." The other, a life estate, was a

sale unto Roger Williams of "ye lands and meadowes upon the two fresh rivers, called mowshassuck and wanasquatucket." This MEMORANDUM reads as follows:

AT NAUHIGGANSICK, THE 24TH OF THE FIRST MONTH COMMONLY CALLED MARCH IN THE SECOND YEARE OF OUR PLANTATION OR PLANTING AT MOSHANSICK, OR PROVIDENCE, MEMORANDUM, That we Caunannicus and Meiauantunnomi, the two chiefe sachims of Nanheggansick, haveing Two years since sold unto Roger Williams the lands and meadowes upon the two fresh Rivers called mowshausuck & wanasquatuckqut, doe now by these presents Establish & Confirme the bounds of those lands from the Rivers & Fields of Pautucket, The great hill of Notaquonuckanet on the norwest and the towne of Maushappog on the West. As also in Consideration of the many Kindnesses & Services he hath continually for us both with our friends of Massachusett, as also at Quinikticutt, And Apaum or Plimouth, wee doe freely give unto him all that land from those Rivers Reaching to Pautuxett River, as also the Grasse & meadowes upon Pautuxett River, In witnes where of wee have bereunto set our hands.

YE MARKE OF (X) CAUNOUNICUS.  
YE MARKE OF (X) MIANTUNOMI.

In the presence of:

YE MARKE OF (X) SOTAASH.  
YE MARKE OF (X) ASSOTEMEWETT.

At the bottom of the page of this manuscript document, below the first MEMO., appears the following:

1639, Md 3 mon 9 die this was all againe Confirmed by Miantonomi he acknowledged this his act and hand up the streame of Pawtucket and Pawtuxett without limitts wee might have for our use of Cattell.

Witnes hereof Roger Williams, Benedict Arnold. E. E.

It is impossible to translate, with literal accuracy, the two memoranda, as will appear by the photographic reproduction of the original, but the early transcripts are undoubtely substantially correct. It is well understood that Mr. Thomas James wrote the second Memorandum, while the first is the well-known hand of Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams admitted the signature as his own to the second writing, and the date to be 1639. These two Memoranda, dated respectively March 24, 1638, and May 9, 1639, are the only documents or writings which Mr. Williams received from the chiefs of the Narragansetts, giving a title to lands at Moshassuck, as this territory was called by the Indians. The quality of these two instruments we have discussed in another chapter. It is only necessary to state here that neither would stand the test of a legal transfer, either under English law of that day or of American jurisprudence

of any day. Allowing the most liberal interpretation to the Memoranda as conferring a life-estate on Mr. Williams, with no reference to heirs and assigns, our main purpose in this chapter is to define as exactly as one can, the bounds of the territory included by the conveyance, although there is a great doubt whether either party had exact knowledge or understanding of the boundary terminals. Two of the boundary lines are fixed beyond dispute,—the Pawtucket River on the east and the Pawtuxet River on the south. In this connection we may assume that the Pawtucket River (alias Seekonk) bore that name as far to the south as the entrance of the Pawtuxet, that is to Namquit and Bullock's Points of modern days. The northern boundary line seems to be pretty clearly established by a quotation from "The Sovereign Plaster," page 73, Vol. II, Providence Records:

Wee declare that or bounds are limited in our Towne Euidence and by us stated about 20 years since and Knowe to be the Riner and fields of patuckit suger loafe hill Bewits Prow obseruation Rock absolute Swampe oxford and hipses Rock & the men that were opointed to set it were Chad Browne Hugh Bu—— Gre Dexter and Will Wickenden.

The "fields of Pawtuckit" include Central Falls, thence in a westerly direction to the northwest corner of Absolute Swamp, some of which is included in Quinsicket or Lincoln Park. The Break-Neck road from Quinsicket Station on the Woonsocket trolley road to Scott's Pond is, as near as can be now determined, the upper line of Moshassuck of 1638.

Our chief difficulty lies along the south and west lines. What was the length of the southern line along the Pawtuxet? The Memorandum of 1638 gives "ye great hill of Notquonchanet on ye northwest and the towne of Maushapogue on ye west." The hill is well known as Neutakonkanut, now in the tenth ward of Providence. Mashapaug was the name of an Indian "towne" or rather village settlement, on the present site of Auburn, in the city of Cranston. We may regard Absolute Swamp as the northwest bound of Moshassuck and Mashapaug village (Auburn) as the southwest, with Neutakonkanut Hill as an intermediary bound, the connecting lines on the west being more or less direct, adjustable at the convenience of parties in interest. In 1666, Mr. Williams confirmed the bounds as stated in the original Memorandum of 1638, interpreting those bounds to include "the lands and meadows upon the two ffresh rivers, called Mooshasick and Wanquatucket." A three-mile line to the north, the west and the south of the State House, Providence, would practically include the bounds of early Moshassuck. If we want a natural river bound on the southwest, we may accept the Pocasset River, from its union with the Pawtuxet, to Hipses (Hesperus) Rock, on the west of the big hill, Neutakonkanut.

Trouble began (and begins with us still) in the proper interpretation of the second memorandum. But let us see what Mr. Williams proposes to do and does do with the twenty square miles of land, more or less, which the generous sachems have donated to him. From the status of a poor man, living in part on the bounty of friends, he has become, suddenly, the richest land holder in New England. Two opinions were held at this time (1638) as to the real ownership of Moshassuck or Providence. Mr. Williams, in a letter to the town, long after, said, "They (the lands) were mine own as truly as any man's coat on his back." It was contended, on the other hand, by the chief settlers at Moshassuck, that Mr. Williams acted as the agent of the squatters and that an equitable division was due them. The theoretical question may never be settled, except as its solution may be inferred from the action of Mr. Williams, under date of October 8, 1638, when he conveyed "unto my loving friends and neighbors. Stukeley Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Ezekiel Holyman, and such others as the major part of us shall admit unto the same fellowship of vote with us," all the lands included in the sachem's gift. The act of transfer validates the claim. However, there still existed a lurking suspicion in the form and contents of the "Initial Deed,"—an absolutely worthless paper,—that, later, something might turn up in Mr. Williams' favor, by which he might come again into full possession of his "Promised Land." The insertion of the term, "*My loving friends and neighbors,*" would naturally be interpreted to mean that the transaction was one of mutual gratification and that Mr. Williams held the most cordial relations with the co-founders of the town. On the other hand, the beneficiaries of the "Initial Deed" did not dare to demand a substantial transfer, lest they should lose the nominal hold they had on the lands. Morally, Mr. Williams was held to his agreement, not legally, and all the land transactions at Providence, from October, 1638, to December 20, 1661, bore the taint of the illegal act of Mr. Williams as well as the limitations of the life estate conveyed to Mr. Williams by the sachems' deed of March 24, 1638. The town of Providence, or the Proprietary accepted the deed of 1661, and had it entered on their records, making it an affirmation of the titles held under the "Initial Deed," and assuming in it a freehold estate, which it was not, in fact, unless adverse possession had made it such. In 1666, Mr. Williams legalized the "Initial Deed," which created the Proprietary Estate, conveying to twelve persons, twelve-thirteenths of his lands at Moshassuck. This act, after a lapse of twenty-eight years since the original, confirmed and reaffirmed the Proprietary titles, and silenced the complaints of dissatisfied land-holders, within the limits of the Memorandum of March, 1638.

A singular act followed the creation of the Proprietary, which consisted of Stukeley Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Ezekiel Holyman and Roger Williams, thirteen in all. On the eighth day of October, 1638, the thirteen proprietors made a division of the lands described in the "Initial Deed," into two parts, known in the records as "The Grand Purchase of Providence," and "The Pawtuxet Purchase." "The Providence Purchase" remained as a Proprietary, although it was usually called a "Town." "The Pawtuxet Purchase" was divided equally between the thirteen proprietors, each agreeing to pay to Mr. Williams an equal proportion of twenty pounds for the lands in that division. Here we find a wheel within a wheel. Thirteen proprietors, having covenanted to a fixed rule in the disposal of their lands, now unanimously agree to sell to each other a large tract of the Proprietary, to be divided among themselves in individual holdings, in fee simple. "The Pawtuxet Purchase" was bounded on the south by the Pawtuxet River, on the east by the Pawtucket River. On the north by a line from Sassafrax Point to Nentakonkanut Hill and Hipses' Rock, crossing Mashapaug Pond in its course. The west line, we may limit by the Pocasset River, as it was understood at that time, but modified by the Second Memorandum of 1639. The territory within these bounds was about four miles from east to west and two miles from north to south—eight square miles or over five thousand acres of land. Divided among thirteen purchasers, the transaction gave to each about 400 acres of land for a consideration of less than ten dollars. There is no wonder that Judge Staples should declare that "great dissensions and difficulties grew out of this division," for it was not only scandal-working in its nature, but unjust to all other *bona fide* squatters at Providence. This transaction, the Pawtuxet Purchase, lets in a flood of light on the first acts of a real business character of Mr. Williams with his Associates, some of whom he calls "loving friends and neighbors." Mr. Williams held his life-estate in the Moshassuck lands, in his own right, from March 24, 1638, until October 8, 1638. There are no current records at Providence of the events of that period. We may assume that the disposition of his newly acquired estate was the burning question of the time, for it was true that nigh one hundred persons were dwelling in log shanties at Moshassuck, waiting the hour when they could call the parcel of ground on which they had located, their own. The Arnolds had been squatters at Pawtuxet for 30 months. William Harris, wife Susannah and son Andrew, co-occupants of Pawtuxet lands with the Arnolds and Carpenters, and a companion of Mr. Williams in his flight to Providence, were land-hungry, demanding a share in the Williams legacy.

We may safely assume that all the dwellers between the Pawtucket and the Pawtuxet were soliciting or demanding lands. Several courses were open to Mr. Williams. Portsmouth had set an example by offering the lands on Aquidneck at two shillings an acre, payable in installments into the public treasury for public uses, thereby relieving the people from taxes. The same could have been done by Mr. Williams. He could have created a trust estate for the benefit of his family or for the present or future benefit of the town of Providence. A single letter to Governor Winthrop, undated, shows the working of Mr. Williams' mind in this period of mental conflict. It is a singular combination of autocracy, aristocracy and proprietorship. The proprietary was a corporate trust in perpetuity; the aristocracy was the determination of the membership of the Proprietary by the original recipients of the trust; the autocracy rested in the suggestion of Mr. Williams that no one should be received into membership not acceptable to him. In this letter no reference is made as to *conscience liberty* or any of its aliases, as it appears by exclusion under the term, "ONLY IN CIVIL THINGS" in the Richard Scott petition for membership among "masters of families," incorporated. We must wait forty years for evidence conclusive as to his indecision relative to his disposition of his original estate. In 1677, William Harris, in his Declaration against the Town of Providence, "*chargeth Roger Williams for taking the land of Providence in his own name, which should have been taken in the name of those which came up with him.* \* \* \* *Williams writing initials in his deed was a mere pretence of haste; that he promised a more formal deed, but that when one was drawn, he refused to sign it.*"

In his answer to Harris, Mr. Williams sets forth clearly and most emphatically his reasons for his acts in 1638:

As to my selling them Pawtuxet & Providence, it is not true that I was such a fool as to sell either of them especially as W. H. (William Harris) saith "like an Halter in a market, who gives most." The truth in the holy presence of the Lord is this. William Harris (W. H.) pretending religion, worried me with desires that I should admit him & others into fellowship with my purchase. I yielded and agreed that the place should be such as destitute (especially for conscience sake), & that each person so admitted, should pay 30s. country pay, towards a town stock, and myself have £30 towards my charges (of) which I have had £28 in broken parcels in five years. Pawtuxet I parted with at a small addition to Providence (for then that monstrous bound or business of "up stream without limits" was not thought of. W. Harris and the first twelve of Providence were restless for Pawtuxet, & I parted with it upon the same terms, *viz.*, for the supply of the destitute, & I had a loan of them (then dear) when these twelve men (out of pretence of conscience and my desire of peace) had gotten power out of my hands, yet they still yielded to my grand desire of propagating a public interest, etc., etc.

We have tried to determine and describe as nearly as the written records will allow, the territory granted to Roger Williams in March, 1638, and its later subdivision into two purchases, Providence and Pawtuxet, in the autumn of the same year, including the sale of twelve-thirteenths of the territory to twelve of his associate founders. In the two neighborhoods, at Moshassuck and Pawtuxet, there may have been twenty families with at least one hundred settlers, possibly a few more. Between March and October, 1638, Mr. Williams wrote a letter to Gov. John Winthrop of Boston, which Mr. Stokes calls "the fullest picture of the early days of the settlement of any writing of the period." This letter reveals the status and internal conditions of the inchoate settlements at Moshassuck and Pawtuxet, and the working of Mr. Williams' mind as to the best method of solving the new problems of organization and development. In view of the many grandiloquent oratorical enlogiums poured out passionately on Roger Williams as the original founder of a free state, etc., the tenor of this letter to Gov. Winthrop will be found mildly disappointing. He addresses Mr. Winthrop as Deputy Governor, an office which he held from May, 1637, to May, 1640. He requested "a word of private advice with the soonest convenience, if it may be, by this messenger." The substance of this important letter is as follows:

The condition of myself and those few families here planting with me, you know full well. We have no Patent, nor doth the face of Magistracy suit with our present condition. Hitherto, the masters of families have ordinarily met once a fortnight and consulted about our common peace, watch and planting; and mutual consent have finished all matters with speed and peace.

Now of late some young men, single persons (of whom we had much need) being admitted to freedom of inhabitation, and promising to be subject to the orders made by the consent of the householders, are discontented with their estate, and seek the freedom of vote also, and equality, &c.

Besides, our dangers (in the midst of these dens of lions) now especially call upon us to be compact in a civil way and power.

I have therefore had thoughts of propounding to my neighbors a double subscription, concerning which I shall humbly crave your help.

The first concerning ourselves, the masters of families; thus:

P. *We whose names are hereunder written, late inhabitants of the Massachusetts, (upon occasion of some differences of conscience,) being permitted to depart from the limits of that Patent, under the which we came over into these parts, and being cast by the Providence of the God of Heaven, remote from others of our countrymen amongst the barbarians in this town of New Providence, do with free and joint consent promise each unto other, that, for our common peace and welfare (until we hear further of the King's royal pleasure concerning ourselves), we will from time to time subject ourselves to such orders and agreements, as*

*shall be made by the present housholders, and such as shall be hereafter admitted by their consent into the same privilege and covenant in our ordinary meeting.*

In witness whereof we hereunto subscribe, &c.

Concerning those few young men, and any who shall hereafter (by your honorable connivance) desire to plant with us, this:

*We whose names are hereunder written, being desirous to inhabit in this Town of New Providence, do promise to subject ourselves in active or passive obedience to such orders and agreements as shall be made from time to time by the greater number of the present householders of this Town, and such whom they shall admit into the same fellowship and privilege. In witness whereof, &c.*

Hitherto, we choose one, (named the officer,) to call the meeting at the appointed time. Now it is desired by some of us that the house-holders by course perform that work, as also gather votes and see the watch go on, &c.

I have not yet mentioned these things to my neighbors, but shall as I see cause upon your loving Counsel.

As also since the place I have purchased, secondly, at my own charge and engagements, the inhabitants paying by consent thirty shillings apiece as they come, until my charge be out for their particular lots; and thirdly, that I never made any other covenant with any other person, but that if I got a place he should plant there with me. My query is this:

Whether I may not lawfully desire this of my neighbors, that as I freely subject myself to common consent, and shall not bring in any person into the town without their consent; so also that against my consent no person be violently brought in and received.

I desire not to sleep in security and dream of a nest which no hand can reach. I cannot but expect changes and the change of the last enemy death, yet dare I not despise a liberty, which the Lord seemeth to offer me, if for mine own or other's peace. And therefore have I been thus bold to present my thoughts unto you.

This letter was written later than March 24, 1638, as he speaks of "*the place I have purchased,*" and with equal probability later than October, 1638, when the Proprietary was formed for he tells of "*the inhabitants paying thirty shillings apiece as they come.*" The letter has values in what it says and fails to say as to the organization and management of the new town, as conceived by Mr. Williams. We note:

1. That the new town had "a few families," and "some young men, single persons."
2. That New Providence had no Royal Patent.
3. "Nor doth the face of Magistracy suit with our present condition,"—that is, that the masters of families, including Mr. Williams, did not think it wise to establish any form of civil government.

4. That matters of "common peace, watch and planting," were settled by "the masters of families" "with speed and peace." This statement does not harmonize with Mr. Williams' reply to William Harris in 1677.

6. "Householders," "masters of families," were the governing body of the community. This plan vested an exclusive governmental control in married men, heads of families,—a close corporation of landed Proprietors, selected by Mr. Williams to manage the Proprietary Estate and to make "orders and agreements," to which all must submit "in active or passive obedience."

7. The creation of two classes of citizens, married and landholders and "young men, single persons," landless. The latter class were tenantry, with no voice or vote as to the officers of the community or the laws which they were called upon to obey.

8. The Proprietors, as purchasers of twelve-thirteenths of Mr. Williams' Indian grant, were assumed to be the owners of the lands conveyed by the "Initial Deed," and not as people of a common stock.

9. The most singular proposition is found in Mr. Williams' plan that "against my consent no person be violently brought in and received." Here we find the assumption of autocratic power on the part of Mr. Williams, in singular opposition to the doctrine of civil freedom, of which he has been proclaimed the founder at Providence. The control of the law-making and land-holding class is a pure *autocracy* and not a pure *democracy*.

Mr. Williams' letter is quite as remarkable in its omissions as in its statements of his views as to a model state. State builders have ideals of their future. They have a mental model at least of the fabric they hope to create. The ideal and plan are essentials to hold their associates to their purpose and to inspire their hopes. The Pilgrims signed their civil and religious compact in the cabin of the "Mayflower." The Puritans recorded their purpose of statehood in their Patent and again through their declaration on the deck of the "Arbella." The Portsmouth settlers, before they left Boston incorporated themselves "into a Bodie Politick," under just laws framed by the people, administered by officers chosen of the people, by all the people. Mr. Williams was familiar with the usual and necessary formula for a town and a state. His five years debate with the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay, in his declarations as to their social, civil and religious sins and crimes, precludes belief as to his positive nature and protesting faith. Religion, education, freedom of opinion, landed possessions, the town meeting, suffrage, were common privileges and more, they were the conserving forces of civil society. Mr. Williams must have known all this but failed absolutely in declaring for a single principle of civil or religious freedom, and the first years of Providence

are consumed in a greedy scramble for land and in the bitter hatreds and disappointments gendered in the unholy war.

It can be truthfully and emphatically stated that from June, 1636, for a decade of years, not a sentence can be found in Mr. Williams' writings that states any high or noble purpose he had in view in the occupation and use of the Moshassuck purchase. Still more, although Mr. Williams was the only man of fair education in Providence, during the formative years of purpose and policy, he enters no protest against the statement, "*nor does the face of Magistracy suit with our present condition.*" Individualism, lawlessness, anarchy may rule among those who have been Mr. Williams' admirers and followers in Salem, who have made themselves his "loving neighbors and friends" at Providence. They choose to live without legal or official restraints, unembarrassed by civil authority, —a weak foundation on which to build a State.

It is claimed that Mr. Williams incorporated the phrase, "only in civil things," in his statement of what his new town might do,—that it should not touch religion. The phrase is not found in Mr. Williams' letter or in any other paper over his signature. It is only found in a paper penned by Richard Scott and Associates, in a petition to become shareholders in the benefits of the Proprietary, and limiting the Proprietary to civil affairs in its personal claims on them. Mr. Williams has no claim to such exclusion.

It is abundantly proven that "a few families" at Moshassuck and Pawtuxet, in part drawn to a new settlement by Roger Williams, occupied, as squatters, some of the lands between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet Rivers; that none but Mr. Williams laid claim to education; that none, including Mr. Williams, had had any experience in the practical duties of government and few had any preconceived notions of civil government as a controlling force in society; that this individualistic community lived for more than two years in a state of expectancy of lands and homes, until in October, 1638, a few of the few were allowed to share with Mr. Williams in the Indian estate given him, under conditions and limitations most unusual and singular in the founding of towns and States. Thus Providence began to be.



## CHAPTER IX

PROVIDENCE—EARLY LAND ALLOTMENTS



## CHAPTER IX.

### PROVIDENCE—EARLY LAND ALLOTMENTS.

Government is not an automatic machine, nor a machine product. It is a growth, not a creation. It is the expression of the major sentiment of the body which creates it and its ideals and organization are the measure of its concrete development. The founding of Providence illustrates a growth from a purely financial or economic principle, separative and individual, through the stages of a protective social and civil order until the adoption of the Great Charter of 1663, which established certain fixed standards of democratic institutions and policies in town and colony.

The first settlers of Moshassuck were young men and women. No one of them had had any experience in matters of local government, and on their arrival in the wilderness, they saw but little need of any. Roger Williams was the only one who could claim educational ability, beyond that of reading and writing. All were novices and, as squatter sovereigns, all were equals, without lands, homes or country. It would be nothing short of a Bible-day miracle to expect any except the simplest and crudest forms of government in such a community. Ignorance and inexperience are always conservative, and often obstructive to good order. The thing created can never exceed the thought and purpose of the Creator.

On October 8, 1638, the territory of Providence was owned by thirteen men, styled "house-holders," "masters of families," proprietors. The organ of control was styled a proprietary, a purely business enterprise. The original proprietors were Roger Williams, Stukeley Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, and Ezekiel Holliman, thirteen in all. The Proprietary, indistinctly outlined in Mr. Williams' letter to Gov. Winthrop, seemed to him at that time, to be the best instrument for pioneer settlement, his ideal of local government, finance and the distribution of lands. This was Mr. Williams' contribution to the early Colonial period, and the foundation principle in the history of Providence Plantations. So firmly was the Proprietary established that it lived for nearly two centuries, exercising its functions in various ways, civil and economic, as a separative, disjunctive, individual, selfish factor, in the body politic. Note its operations.

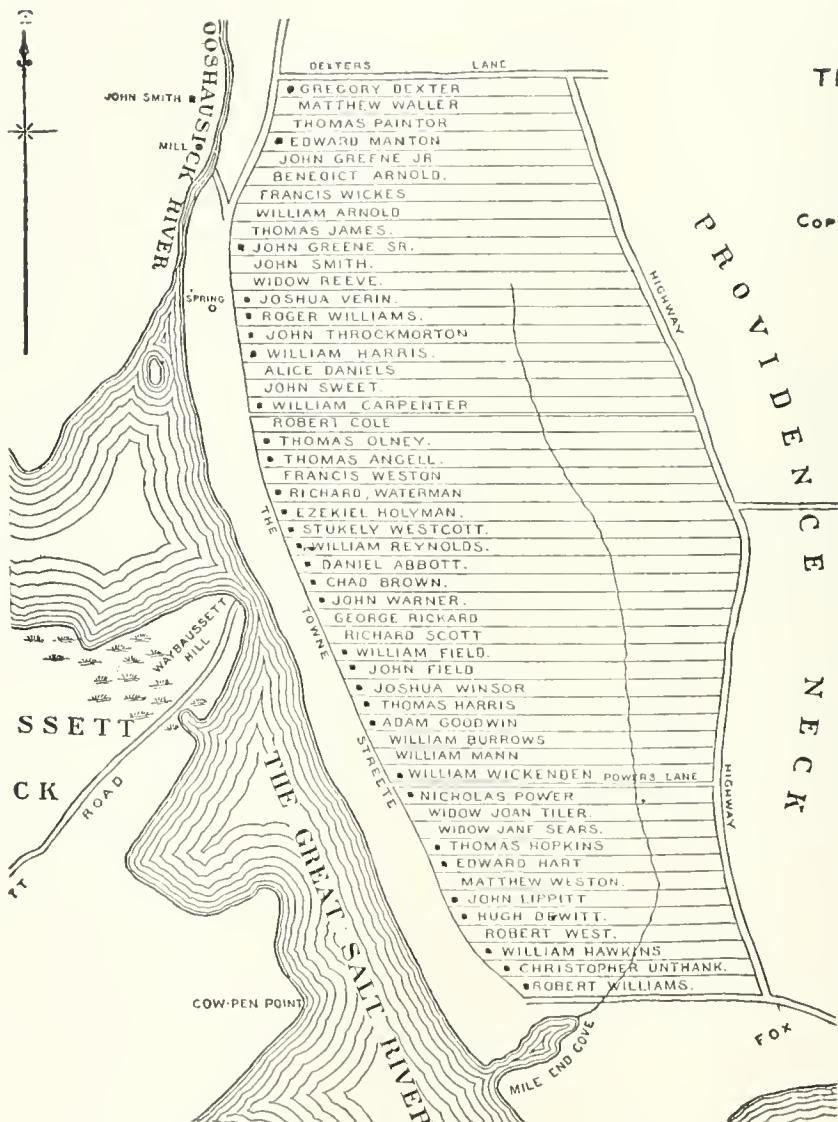
The deed from Roger Williams created a close corporation of land holders in perpetual succession, as no reference was made to the lands as a trust estate. On the same day, the whole estate was divided into two

parcels,—the PROVIDENCE and the PAWTUXET lands,—and the PAWTUXET section was converted into thirteen individual estates, in fee simple, each owner receiving one-thirteenth for personal ownership.

In addition to this large estate of the original Indian grant, each of the proprietors received, in the Providence section, in fee simple, a home lot of five acres, butting westerly on the “Towne Streete” in New Providence, a six-acre lot of upland or meadow for cultivation, in another part of the town, and one hundred acres of timberland in some other section,—one hundred and eleven acres in all. Each of the original thirteen proprietors owned, in fee simple, about five hundred acres of land, at a nominal cost of fifty shillings,—\$12.50.

The Proprietors' corporate interests lay in the balance of the common or undivided lands, about ten thousand acres. These interests included, first, the right of commonage,—the free pasturage of cattle and the right to cut and use timber for fencing, fuel and building, and second, a proportionate share of the proceeds of the sale of common lands to new settlers. It is readily seen that Mr. Williams combined with twelve other men to form a landed oligarchy, holding a monopoly on all the lands between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet rivers. This corporate body, by a major vote, could admit other persons to the Proprietary, with or without Mr. Williams' consent. Self interest ruled in the counsels and the acts of the Proprietors, and Mr. Williams usually found himself in the minority in its decisions. The Proprietors not only owned all the lands, but they were also the freemen of the community, holding all civil as well as economic interest under their control. The oligarchy became an aristocracy of poor men,—both elements hostile to a democracy. Williams was absolutely helpless in the hands of his “loving neighbors and friends.” Later, in 1677, forty years after the “Initial Deed,” he stated that he was deceived and cheated by dishonest associates and that he intended to create a trust estate at the outset for the benefit of the town, but all the written documents of the earlier years, especially the Winthrop letter, disprove the claims. In further proof that Providence lands were vested in a private, hereditary trust, it appears that the proceeds of all lands sold after October, 1638, were divided among the Proprietors, Mr. Williams receiving his share, in common with Arnold, Harris, Carpenter, Brown and all others. These dividends accruing from the sale of lands held by the monopolists, were not large at first, for land was cheap; even in 1650, “home shares” were sold at *one shilling* an acre and common land at *six pence* per acre. Benedict Arnold and others paid only two shillings for their five acre homesteads on the “Towne Streete.” At Portsmouth, the Boston emigrants, following their Democratic ideals, had made their whole purchase the common property of all the settlers. Land was sold at two





shillings per acre, one-half to be paid "presently," the other half in three months from the day of purchase. The proceeds of all sales were paid to the town treasurer, to be expended for public uses, roads, bridges, etc. This was an equitable and popular plan; far superior to the Proprietary plan. Bitter land contentions began at once at Providence, not only among the Proprietors, but also between the land holders and those who were landless, but who had been admitted as worthy inhabitants, to whom Mr. Williams referred in his letter as those "discontented with their estate, and seek the freedom of vote also and equality, etc." Concerning these land troubles, I shall write later. The first lay-out of Proprietary lands at Providence was made some time subsequent to October, 1638. Moshassuck peninsula was wisely chosen for the location of the "home lots" or "homesteads." A highway, called "the Towne Streete," was laid out on the east bank of the Moshassuck river, from "Mile End Cove," on the south to Dexter's Lane, now Olney street, on the north,—in length about a mile and one-half. A strip of land about a half a mile in width, fronting westerly on this street (now North and South Main) and stretching over Moshassuck Hill (now Prospect) to a middle highway, was divided into fifty-two five-acre lots with narrow alleys between the lots and two streets running east and west connecting the "TOWNE STREETE" and the East highway (now Hope street). These two streets now bear the names of Power and Meeting. "Fones Alley," which separated the lots of Richard Waterman and Francis Weston, still exists as a memorial of the early layout, while several butt-ends of old alleys or lanes still exist, on the east side of the oldest street of Providence. The "home lots" varied from 107 to 125 feet in width on the "TOWNE STREETE" and extended to the present Hope street. The lanes, about twelve feet wide, served as a passageway for cattle, teams and truckage to the rear ends of the lots. Each Proprietor was entitled to one five-acre "homestead." The thirteen original Proprietors chose their lots on what is now North Main street, Mr. Williams selecting a lot in the neighborhood of a large spring which overflowed into the Moshassuck river. Ten of the Proprietors built houses on their lots,—probably of timber cut on the land they had chosen.

We find at the outset of the Proprietary what might readily have been anticipated, the first severance of relations among the circles of neighbors that had come from Massachusetts to Providence to make homes and set up house-keeping and rearing families. The first division was based on a very vital principle in civil society,—an economical one,—land owning and non-land owning. The property severance, among equals, in ordinary conditions of society is fatal to the solidarity of the body politic. The few "first comers," not wealthy, by the good fortune of their early arrival,

had unexpectedly to themselves, come into the possession of more lands than they had ever dreamed of possessing, while the "second comers," an equally respectable body of people, so far as we know, had no part nor lot in the land distribution, and could not buy, unless personally acceptable to the majority of the constituted proprietors. The separation took place at once and so radical was the severance, that a real union never took place between the two classes. Individualism, separateness, class separation on property lines, was the first outcome of the Williams plan. Mr. Williams' explanation, made years afterwards may be accepted and must be excused, on the ground of forgetfulness or the infirmities of age, for no one in our day wishes to accuse him of absolute, intentional falsehood. He said, "I have always been blamed for being too mild, & the truth is Chad Brown, a wise and Godly soul, now with God, with myself, brought the murmuring after-comers (second-comers) & the first monopolizing twelve to a oneness by arbitration, chosen out of ourselves, & Pawtuxet was allowed (only for peace's sake) to the first twelve, and the twelve gave me a share, which I accepted, after the arbitration." To correct Mr. Williams' faulty memory, we only have to refer to the Winthrop letter and to the two deeds given by Mr. Williams, October 7, 1638, by which he retained one-thirteenth of the Proprietary and also one-thirteenth of the Pawtuxet lands. It is also to be remembered that the arbitration plan was not adopted until 1640, two years after the "Initial Deed," that it did not originate with Mr. Williams, was not accepted by all the inhabitants and that it was a failure in accomplishing the ends aimed at and was soon abandoned. The apologists of Mr. Williams have condoned or glossed over these faults and falsehoods so singularly, that, if he had committed wilful murder, it would have been reduced to a case of assault or of self-defence. We must not lose sight of the fact that THE PROPRIETARY and THE PAWTUXET PURCHASE were Mr. Williams' solemn and personal transactions, for both of which he received a satisfactory money consideration, the receipt of which by him is a matter of record and acknowledgment. No cloak is broad or thick enough to conceal Roger Williams as the chief figure in Act Two, of the founding of Providence.

Another separative act was the investment of all directive agency of the community interests in the small body of Proprietors. Judge Staples, the last Proprietors' clerk, wrote in 1843: "During the first years of the Colony (Providence), it is not probable that any of the powers of the community were exercised by or delegated to, any portion of its members." The thirteen original Proprietors, and "such as they received into the same fellowship of vote" transacted all the business at Providence. The few meetings of the Proprietors, indicated by day and month dates, but

no years, are briefly recorded until July 27, 1642. Prior to that date seven meetings are referred to in the records, when certain land agreements and orders are entered. Two meetings are recorded in 1643, one in 1645, one in 1648, four in 1649, eleven in 1650. Most of the business at these meetings related to the sale or exchange of lands. If more frequent meetings were held, the records of them, if made, have been destroyed. One fact is certain that the thirteen original Proprietors did not hold or exercise any civil functions over the Providence settlements, although the Proprietors' meetings were often called "Towne Meetings."

As stated, the fifty-two "home lots," first laid out, lay between "The Towne Streete," (North and South Main) on the west and what is now Hope street, on the east. The names of owners of these lots were as follows, beginning on the south:

Robert Williams,	Joshua Winsor,	Alice Daniels,
Christopher Unthawk,	John Field,	William Harris, O. P.,
William Hawkins,	William Field,	John Throckmorton, O. P.,
Robert West,	Richard Scott,	Roger Williams, O. P.,
Hugh Bewitt,	George Rickard,	Joshua Verin,
John Lippitt,	John Warner,	Widow Reeve,
Matthew Weston,	Chad Brown,	John Smith,
Edward Hart,	Daniel Abbott,	John Greene, Sen., O. P.,
Thomas Hopkins,	William Reynolds,	Thomas James, O. P.,
Widow Sayer,	Staheley Westcott, O. P.,	William Arnold, O. P.,
Widow Tiler,	Ezekiel Holzman, O. P.,	Francis Wickes,
Nicholas Power,	Richard Waterman, O. P.,	Benedict Arnold,
A Highway (Power St.),	Francis Weston, O. P.,	John Greene, Jun.,
William Wickenden,	Thomas Angell,	Edward Manton,
William Man,	Thomas Olney, O. P.,	Thomas Painter,
William Burrows,	Robert Cole, O. P.,	Matthew Waller,
Adam Goodwin,	William Carpenter, O. P.,	Gregory Dexter.
Thomas Harris,	John Sweet,	

The names of the thirteen original proprietors and their first allotments are clearly marked on the Plot of the first division of Home Lots, and are designated in the list by the initials O. P. We find Mr. Williams' lot near the center of the group of Associates, near the spring which bears his name, which he never owned, but was used by all. The committee which surveyed and platted these Moshassuck lots and laid out the "Towne Streete," on the river's side consisted of Chad Brown, John Throckmorton and Gregory Dexter. The dates of the plat, the choice of lots, the building and occupation of the houses on the street are unknown. All the plans of town occupation and building must have been subsequent to October 8, 1638, the date of the Proprietors' Deed. The "six-acre lots" were chosen by the Proprietors in different localities. Seven of these lots were laid out east of Mile End Cove, bordering on the Pawtucket river. The "What Cheer" lot, on which the Indians stood, in their salute to Mr. Williams and his party in 1636, was given to Mr. Williams. Other "six-acre lots" were located on the West and Woonasquatucket rivers.

In 1718, the proprietors of Providence made another division of home-lots. The proprietary shares and shareholders had increased in eighty years from thirteen to one hundred and one, the maximum number. The lands last divided among the proprietors or their assigns lay on the southerly and easterly side of Weybosset street, on the west side of North Main street and on the south side of Olney street. Each proprietor had one lot, determined by the drawing of lots. Subsequently, the water lots, on the west side of South Main street, were platted into warehouse and wharf lots and in most cases sold to the owners of house lots on the opposite side of the street, the proceeds of all sales being divided among the one hundred and one shares. With the increase of the size of the Proprietary, the land interests of the corporation increased and with the increase of population the land values advanced, insomuch that a share in the Corporation became a valuable asset and was transferred by sale or heirship. These lands in corporate ownership were disposed of by vote to particular persons or by division of a certain number of acres to each purchase right, the location of which was left to individual choice, to be surveyed by the company surveyor, allowed by the proprietors or their committee on lands and recorded by the clerk. Until 1718, the clerk was chosen by the town; after that the proprietors met by themselves for the choice of all officers and the transaction of all business. The first link in the chain of titles of almost all Providence real estate is found in the plats, descriptions and returns of the Proprietary surveyors, reaching back to Chad Brown, an early officer of towns, proprietary and church.

The "Initial Deed" of October 8, 1638, conveyed to twelve Associate Proprietors "and such others as the major part of us shall admit unto the same fellowship of vote with us," the lands that Mr. Williams had received from the Sachems. He imposed no conditions and set forth no guiding principles or theories of government. No reference was made in the deed to affairs civil or religious. The thirteen proprietors were the "first comers" to Providence and controlled the situation. The "second comers" were subject to their decisions and policy.

At an early day, how early no one knows,—an interesting and a most important paper was presented to the Syndicate. The paper bears no date, but it reveals the character of the signers. It reads:

"WE WHOSE NAMES ARE HEREUNDER, DESIROUS TO INHABIT IN YE TOWN OF PROVIDENCE, DO PROMISE TO SUBJECT OURSELVES IN ACTIVE OR PASSIVE OBEDIENCE, TO ALL SUCH ORDERS OR AGREEMENTS AS SHALL BE MADE FOR PUBLIC GOOD OF OR BODY, IN AN ORDERLY WAY, BY THE MAJOR CONSENT OF THE INHABITANTS, MAYSTERS OF FAMILIES, INCORPORATED TOGETHER INTO A TOWN FELLOWSHIP, AND SUCH OTHERS WHOME THEY SHALL ADMIT UNTO THEM ONLY IN CIVIL THINGS."

The signers were:

RICHARD SCOTT,  
WILLIAM REYNOLDS,  
JOHN FIELD,  
CHAD BROWNE,  
JOHN WARNER,  
GEORGE RICHARD,  
EDWARD COPE,

THOMAS ANGELL,  
THOMAS HARRIS,  
FRANCIS WICKES,  
BENEDICT ARNOLD,  
JOSHUA WINSOR,  
WILLIAM WICKENDEN.

This petition and pledge sheds a flood of light on early Providence history. Its date does not appear, but it may be safely assumed to be between the years 1639 and 1644, and was addressed by "second-comers" to the corporate body of "present inhabitants,"—the Proprietors. These persons are "masters of families,"—that is, married men, having children. This corporation is all there is that can be called, in a very general way, a town and constitutes a "town fellowship," as they term it. The signers signify their desire to settle in Providence, actively or passively, obedient to all order or agreements, "made for public good of or body," in an orderly fashion. One limitation is injected that gives point and value to the paper—to wit "**ONLY IN CIVIL THINGS.**" These petitioners declare that they will not submit to any authority of the Proprietary except in matters of civil concern, reserving as their natural and unqualified right their opinions and acts in all other matters. This declaration of rights was made to the thirteen Proprietors, of whom Roger Williams was one. This paper follows in part the form which Mr. Williams submitted to Governor Winthrop, but differs from it in the phrase "only in civil things." This is the first time, though in a negative form, that the principle of religious liberty is formally suggested at Providence. The document is in Scott's handwriting. This declaration is not the official act of the Proprietors, but is a limitation of proprietary power, in the petition of thirteen persons to be admitted to membership in the Proprietary, all but one of whom, Edward Cope, took up "house lots" on the plat of the original thirteen proprietors. It has been assumed that this document was a repetition of some prior declaration, but there is no evidence of the existence of any other paper. Scott, Brown, Angell, Wickenden, and the others were the first admissions of record to the Proprietary after its formation and in the "Initial Deed," by Mr. Williams for admission, of October 8, 1638, no terms of membership are stated except a major vote of the Corporation. We are compelled by all the rules of historic evidence to confer on Richard Scott and his associates the honor of the first assertion of the independency of the individual in all matters not of a civil nature.

It is a matter of deep regret that the Proprietors' Records were destroyed by fire, during the life of the last clerk, Judge William R. Staples. The only clear evidence of their contents is to be found in the "*Annals of Providence*," by Judge Staples, published in 1843, and "*The Proprietors of Providence and Their Controversies With the Freeholders*," by Henry C. Dorr. Both had a knowledge of these records, and their writings with the contemporary town records are our only sure guides as to their contents. It is possible and quite probable that the town and Proprietors' records, until 1718, a period of eighty years, are extant in "*The Early Records of the Town of Providence*," inasmuch as the same person acted as town and Proprietors' clerk, until 1718; the haziness of the records indicates a haziness of mental vision as to the affairs temporal as well as spiritual of the Providence settlers. The terms "town," "the body," "inhabitants," "masters of families," "town fellowship," "proprietors," "proprietary," "plantation," "loving friends," "neighbors," are interchangeable terms in the records. From such a medley of suggested ideas we must frame our own conception of what really existed at Providence. The easiest and most natural conclusion is that the Proprietary, created October 8, 1638, was often called the town, that its members were called townsmen and its meetings town meetings. The corporate body of Proprietors was the only organized body, in the exercise of any civil functions at Providence until 1649, when the town of Providence was organized as a civil body, elected officers and assumed civil functions. Prior to that date it is of record that the Proprietary did exercise a measure of authority usually entrusted to towns, such as the probating estates, the preservation of order, and the protection of property rights. In Providence as in all Proprietary towns, there were a body of men with families who had a general or a particular interest in the civil affairs of the community, outside of the Proprietors. The latter class was a small one, but its interests were safeguarded by the semi-official town proprietary. In many towns, proprietary, civil and religious business was transacted in the same meeting, presided over by the moderators and recorded by the clerk in the same book. This was the case in Providence for two or three generations. The legislative function was inherent in the proprietary, and was exercised as an auxiliary within safe limits, but the judicial, executive and police functions were weak and distressingly ineffective at Providence.

Trouble began with the creation of the Proprietary, when the "free holders" party arose in opposition to the land holders. This minority party was a thorn in the side of the land men, and singularly, Mr. Williams took sides with the disaffected against the organization which he had created and of which he was a stockholder. Judge Staples very char-

itably states that the Proprietary was "wanting in that energy necessary to preserve the peace and ensure the prosperity of a growing community." The fact really was that the corporation formed October 8, 1638, was not formed to "preserve peace" and "ensure prosperity." It was a land-holding, land-jobbing, land-selling scheme, with no moral, social, civil, educational or religious ends in view. They had the "corner" on all the lands at Providence and Pawtuxet and held control of its gradually decreasing possessions for two centuries, thereby enriching themselves, their heirs and assigns, and contributing but little of their great estate to the town of which they are the accredited founders. At the opening of the year 1640, the situation at Providence may be stated thus:

(a) All the lands included in the sachems' gift to Mr. Williams were owned and controlled by a few Proprietors of whom Mr. Williams was one.

(b) The Proprietary, incorporated October 8, 1638, sometimes called the town, was a private institution, assuming the exercise of such civil matters as seemed necessary for its own protection and advantage. It had no coercive authority and no constable to enforce it.

(c) The quasi-town of Providence was made up of the Proprietors, who by majority vote decided inhabitancy, proprietorship and the right to vote in the town proprietor meetings.

(d) The Proprietary made no declaration of rights and made no claim to a Democracy, as it was not a body politic and exercised itself mainly in the disposal of lands.

(e) Owing to the exclusive control of lands by the Proprietary, few immigrants came to Providence, except as forced by the government of Massachusetts Bay Colony to leave that Colony "for conscience sake."

Mr. Henry C. Dorr thus sums up conditions at Providence:

It was subject from its earliest days to violent discontents and disturbances. The purchasers from Mr. Williams, the original twelve and their successors, insisted upon the enjoyment of the "fellowship of vote," in the town meeting. The landless younger portion of the society still claimed that they should not be excluded from the body politic. \* \* \* There appeared at an early day the germs of two parties, which grew stronger as the town increased, and kept it in perpetual turmoil. Some were disappointed in what they found here, and some were captious and discontented. Some had come from Massachusetts to escape its intolerance and the arbitrary rule of its magistrates and elders. Beyond this, which was but negative, they had but few positive opinions in common. About twelve families sympathized with Mr. Williams in his religious opinions, but the majority kept aloof from all associations of the kind.

The principal event of 1640 at Providence fully confirms all that has been stated as to the uncivil turmoils incident to the Proprietary man-

agement and the undemocratic conditions ensuing. This event was to establish an outward veneer, called government by arbitration, over the autocratic and aristocratic proprietary, to settle the "*many differences amongst us*," "to bring them to unity and peace." On the 5th of July, 1640, less than two years after the Proprietors had taken over all the lands, a committee consisting of Robert Cole, Chad Brown, William Harris and John Warner, reported an agreement as to "the fairest and equallest way to produce our peace." It is noteworthy that three of the four, "chosen by the consent of our loving friends and neighbors" were second-comers, William Harris only representing the first group. After fixing the boundary line of the Pawtuxet Purchase, the committee submitted the decision of land and personal differences and offences to five Disposers as a Court to hear and decide cases. This report was endorsed by thirty-nine persons, all proprietors except Edward Cope. The safety valve of "liberty of conscience" was attached to this Proprietary protector of corporate interests. As Mr. Cole, the head of the committee, had suffered punishment in the Bay Colony for inordinate and continued drunkenness, it could easily be seen why the "*liberty of conscience*" clause was inserted in the Agreement. Judge Staples remarks, "The new system, by its weakness and lack of energy, gave rise to difficulties which to some of the inhabitants seemed inherent and insurmountable. The great liberty which all enjoyed was abused by some to licentiousness. From the denial of the right of government to interfere in matters of conscience, some claimed the right to do with impunity whatever they said conscience dictated. Others were accused of denying all power in magistrates." Massachusetts law-breakers fled to Providence as a "city of refuge" from restraint and judgment.

The absence of law and police made Providence a paradise for fugitives from justice, on grounds of "liberty of conscience,"—a grievously misleading term in Providence history. In 1641, matters at Providence had reached the breaking point, and, on the 17th of November, thirteen of the chief of the Proprietors, signers of the Arbitration Agreement, wrote to the Government of Massachusetts, praying them "of gentle courtesy and for the preservation of humanity and mankind," to lend them "a neighbor-like helping hand" to enforce the law in a civil case. Massachusetts refused to interfere, as Providence was outside its jurisdiction. In 1642, Robert Cole, William Arnold, William Carpenter and Benedict Arnold submitted themselves and their lands to the protection and government of the Bay Colony, remaining under that control until 1658, thereby constituting a part of Providence Plantations as an integral part of Massachusetts as to taxation and protection.

Besides the Proprietors, who held the lands and exercised the priv-

ilege of voting, other persons were received as "townsmen," with or without land ownership. Some townsmen were "quarter-right purchasers," receiving a free grant of twenty-five acres of land apiece, with the right of commoning. Such persons promised "to yield active or passive obedience" to the authorities and not "claim any right to the purchase of the said Plantations, nor any privilege of vote in town affairs" until made free men. Among the "quarter right" men, the names of Pardon Tillinghast, Thomas Clemence, Maturin Ballou, John Sayles, Epenetus Olney, John Steere and Lawrence Wilckenden appear, with twenty-one others, in 1646.

In lieu of regular deeds of land from the Proprietors the records appear thus: "27 July, 1642. This day it was agreed that Thomas Olnca (Olney) shall haue the parcell of land containing 6 Acors of land neer the place Called bayleas (Bailey's) Coau (Cove)," etc., or thus: "Layd out unto Andrew Harris upon his purchase rights, three acres of land in lue of half a share." Such memoranda constitute the bulk of the records until after the incorporation of the town, in 1649. Regular deeds of lands properly signed, sealed and recorded do not appear on the Providence town books prior to 1650.

The meetings of the Proprietors, usually called town meetings, had no interest for the small handholders and the lessee class of townspeople. William Harris and Thomas Olney, clerk, were leaders of the landed class, while Mr. Williams was the head of the "down-and-out" party, against the body of his own creation, the Proprietary. Mr. Williams had neither constructive, executive or diplomatic ability, while Harris and Olney had all these qualities. Then again, Mr. Williams had withdrawn, after four months, says Backus, from the society called Baptists and had thereby lost his influence as a religious teacher and guide. Thomas Olney and William Harris were in good and regular standing in the religious body, and Harris had a full share of worldliness mingled with Godliness that enabled him to exercise a controlling influence over the hopeful but increasing ungodly class of new comers. As late as 1669, Mr. Williams appeals to the land aristocracy in behalf of those who do not and others who will not come to town meeting, but the fact remains that the men of property, the Proprietors, were able and organized and retained their control of town and proprietary affairs during their lives and left their heritage of wealth and power to their successors. Even then their voting power placed them in the minority.

In Mr. Williams' perplexed condition of mind and estate over the divisions and distractions at Providence it occurred to him that an incorporation under a Royal Patent might satisfy the people, and accordingly, in the autumn of 1643, he set sail from New York for London to

intercede with Harry Vane and others for official relief. On this errand, Mr. Williams was successful in a measure, securing a Patent for a colony to be organized on Narragansett Bay. The Patent conferred territorial rights and governmental power in the most general terms, but its title fully evidences Mr. Williams' absolute want of diplomacy. Had he named it Rhode Island, Aquidneck or Narrangansett Colony, all would have been well. Instead, he styles it "The Colony of Providence Plantations in Narragansett Bay," when as yet Providence had only a nominal existence in a land corporation. He named three towns in the Colonial grant, Newport, Portsmouth and Providence, only two of which had a corporate being. The Rhode Island Colony on Aquidneck had no civil relations with the people at the head of the Bay and no sympathy with their disorganized conditions. Mr. Williams' act was generously applauded by his own coterie, but lost him favor with the more considerate and conservative at Moshassuck and Aquidneck. So strong was the Island sentiment against the Williams Patent that three years passed before Portsmouth and Newport would consent to unite in the establishment of a colonial government under it, and the terms of the Civil Compact, drawn by the Island Colony, were accepted by the leaders at Providence. Even then, the Providence aristocracy delayed two years before taking a charter of incorporation as a town, which was granted at a session of the General Assembly, held at Warwick, March 14, 1649. From this date until 1718, the duties of Proprietors' Clerk and Town Clerk were performed by the same person and the records of the Proprietary and Town are often undistinguishable by the text or context. In recognition of the advent of a town charter and organization it was "ordered that or constable shall haue a staffe made him whereby he shall be knowne to haue the authority of the Town-Constable."

Till 1649, Providence had lived without law and attempted to govern without government. As Mr. Williams had declared, "the face of magistracy" was not acceptable to people who held that "civil was nothing but a voluntary agreement and that judicial authority was mere arbitration." Unlicensed individualism was the source of the unnumbered troubles of the Proprietary and the dual conditions of civil and financial affairs that followed. Mr. Williams himself was bold enough to declare at a later period his belief in law and order, while, to the end of his days he continued to indulge in a millennium of "loving friends and neighbors," obedient to the Golden Rule.

The Proprietors continued to hold sway in town and Proprietary matters. They decided who were acceptable land-holders, and determined who should be voters. They restrained the cutting and sale of timber trees in order to discourage ship-building and commerce. The first tax

bill of Providence appears in the year 1650, the gross amount being £58.5,—Benedict Arnold, the largest property holder, being assessed for £5. Estates were ordered sold for non-payment of taxes and non-occupation. Deeds were unusual and were not made mandatory until the Great Charter of 1663. The Proprietors had assessed no taxes and had made no corporate movements for public improvements, such as surveying and laying out highways, building bridges, clearing lands, etc. Wapwaysit Bridge over the Moshassuck at the junction of Randall and Stevens streets, the first public enterprise in the town, was built by contributions of labor and materials, about 1650. In 1667, Roger Williams was ordered "to Receave Tole" at Wapwaysit, "towards suporting of the above said bridge."

From the date of the charter of the town of Providence in 1649, the election of town officers, the establishment of a court of trials and the organization of "magistracy" in the community, town and Proprietary records are merged in one and it is difficult to disentangle the meshes of dual records, under the hand of clerks who were servants of both corporate bodies until 1718. During the life of Mr. Williams, two men by their executive ability and personal influence ruled the Proprietary as well as the town,—William Harris and Thomas Olney, and at the death of both, the power was vested in the popular leader and town-proprietary clerk, Thomas Olney, Jr.

William Harris was one of the greatest of the founders of Providence, in many points superior to Roger Williams, but a very different type of man. He was born in 1610, was of the ripe age of twenty-one when he reached Boston, on the ship "Lyon" with Mr. Williams in 1631, went at once to Salem, where he married, and with a wife and one child, "poor and destitute," joined his exiled friend in the departure from Salem and the Bay Colony, in 1636. Williams came out on a mission among the Narragansetts, Harris came to get land, make a home, raise a family and get more land. Realism ruled his action, while Mr. Williams dreamed dreams. Harris had a legal mind and knew legal forms, methods and principles, superior to any man in Providence. Had he been called upon to draw the Sachems' Deed, it would have been in legal form, with a clear outline of the territory transferred. To this day, no man has ever known precisely its scope, not even Mr. Williams himself. Harris had no liking for Mr. Williams' ideas as to missions, philanthropy or "distressed consciences." He had chosen a pioneer life, with the vigor of a bold and self-determining passion to conquer the wilderness and to play a man's part in the process. He had a clear, keen mind for business. He was conscientious in conflict, which he never shunned when right and justice were at stake. Arnold calls Harris "an active, determined man, resolute in mind,

and vigorous in body, delighting in conflict, bold in his views on the political dogmas of his time, fearless in his mode of expressing them, striking always firmly and often rashly for what he believed to be the right, and denouncing with the energy of a concentrated intellect all men or measures that did not conform to his ideas of truth and honor."

William Harris was the man who had won the freehold of the Pawtuxet Purchase for the thirteen associates, against the purpose of Mr. Williams to establish a mission compound at New Providence. He was the man who had forced Mr. Williams to establish a Proprietary over the balance of the Providence lands, with the rights of inheritance in the trust vested in the legal heirs of the proprietors. Mr. Williams suggested that it might be wise to assume to himself the right of veto to any member of the proprietary. The idea was not adopted and the major vote was the determining factor. The formation of the Proprietary and the sale of the Pawtuxet lands completely frustrated Mr. Williams' scheme as to an Indian mission, for there were no funds available for charitable uses from the sale or rental of lands. Nearly half of the estate had been converted to freehold uses and the sales of the Proprietary lands only provided payment for the cost of administration. No accounting of funds of the Providence Proprietary has ever been made public, and no benefit or residue ever accrued in any form to the Town of Providence. The man of business won over the idealist and William Harris fixed the policy of the settlement—not Roger Williams.

Mr. Williams believed that the Memorandum of 1639, attributed to Miantonomi, did not add a foot of land west of the Pocasset river to the original grant. Mr. Harris construed the Sachems' deed as conveying the fee in all the lands bordering on the Pawtuxet westward, to the limit of the Narragansett territory, about twenty miles, to the Connecticut line. He also believed that the postscript memorandum was a confirmation of the original Sachems' deed. Harris knew as did Miantonomi that the Pawtuxet was a long river, rising in the Nipmuc lands in the northwest hill country. As the Pawtuxet valley lay to the west of the Pocasset Valley it was safely assumed that the bounds of the Sachems' deed might be construed as extending as far to the west as the Warwick Purchase, which ran twenty miles to the Connecticut line. Harris reasoned that it would be an easy matter to extinguish the titles of the local Indian villages that might be found on the territory in question, which he proposed to do.

The long battle is now on between the two giants of Providence, continuing with varying intensity and the alternation of victory and defeat, for forty years, the whole Providence life of the contestants. Mr. Williams so hated his opponent in the struggle that he would not speak his name or write it except by the initials, W. H., or W. Har. It is charity

to both to say that each had a reasonable basis of opposition and that each, in his failure to grasp the other's purpose and motive, acted up to the full standard of his conscientious convictions. It is the duty of the historian to do justice to both of the actors in the long struggle, which outlived the men who were the chief antagonists, Roger Williams and William Harris. It must easily be seen that Mr. Williams was a thoroughly disappointed man. For two years a vision of civilized and converted Indians had cheered and lured him on, amidst wilderness, darkness and discouragements. He saw a multitude of Indians sitting at his feet as disciples of a great master. The mirage of hope dissolves in thin air. He found himself no longer in full control of the lands on which his mission plant was to stand, himself helpless and his great property acquisition in the control of men, many of whom were not in sympathy with his scheme, for he has not confided to them his cherished purpose. Worst of all, the "poor, destitute young man," Harris, whom he allowed to be his companion from Salem, rules the situation by his strong personality and his indomitable will. The pacifist is in the hands of the fighter. We have already seen that Mr. Williams and Mr. Harris were agreed in the conclusion that the Sachems' Deed of 1638 conveyed too small a territory for a good township. Both want an enlargement. Had they acted in harmony, the common need would have been satisfied and the bounds enlarged as they were at a later date. Wide differences in plan and motive led to separate lines of action, to estrangement, to mutual hate and the consequent derangement of civil society.





## CHAPTER X

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THE PROVIDENCE PROPRIETARY



## CHAPTER X. THE PROVIDENCE PROPRIETARY.

Prior to March, 1638, we have no exact knowledge of what transpired at Providence, since 1636, nor do any events prior to that date have any significance, political or religious. Fugitive families, squatters on Indian lands, uncertain as to their future, and restless in their landless and homeless condition, were not in a mood to assert opinions or vindicate rights. Their daily bread was more than a prayer,—it was a supreme effort, and all forms of liberty wait on the products of the soil and the sea, in the sustenance of life itself.

The memorandum deed of the Narragansett chiefs made Roger Williams the sole owner of all the lands between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet Rivers. He is the lord of a large manor. His manner of handling this large and suddenly acquired estate will show what manner of man Mr. Williams is. His ideals will now appear. On some date, now uncertain, Mr. Williams has written to Gov. Winthrop, asking his advice as to the admission of inhabitants to his Moshassuck possessions, and submitted two forms of agreement, one for adults, "masters of families" and another for young men. Mr. Williams wrote:

I have therefore had thoughts of propounding to my neigghours a double subscription, concerning which I shall humbly crave your helpe. The first concerning our selves, the masters of families, thus: We, whose names are hereunder written, late inhabitants of the Massachusetts (upon some occasion of difference of conscience), being permitted to depart from the limits of that Pattent, under the which we came over into these parts, & being cast by the Providence of the God of Heaven, remote from others of our countrymen amongst the barbarous in this towne of New Providence, doe with free & joynt consent promise each unto the other, that, for our common peace & welfare (unitill we heare further of the King's royall pleasure concerning ourselves) we will from time to time subject our selves in active or passive obedience to such orders and agreements, as shall be made by the greater number of the present householders, & such shall be hereafter admitted by their consent into the same privilege & covenant in our ordinairie meeting. In witnes whereof we hereunto subscribe, etc.

Although a speedy reply was called for, no evidence exists of any advice from Boston. From various evidence it appears that Mr. Williams mortgaged his house and land at Salem to meet his expenses at Moshassuck. After the purchase of lands he expected to sell at his option to reimburse his expenditures and for further personal gain. Mr.

Williams also declared it to be his desire "that against my consent no person be violently brought in and receaved. I desire not to sleepe in securitie & dreame of a nest which no hand can reach."

On the 8th of October, 1638, Mr. Williams entered into an agreement with Ezekiel Holymian, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Thomas Olney, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, William Harris, John Throckmorton, John Greene, Thomas James, William Arnold and Stukeley Westcott to divide equally among them, "all the meadow ground at Pawtuxet, bounding upon the fresh rivers upon both sides" on condition that "every man to pay an equal proportion to raise the sum of twenty pounds for the same." On the third day of the tenth month, 1638, Mr. Williams acknowledged the receipt of £18, 11s., 3d. in full.

Presumably (though not certain),<sup>\*</sup> on the same day, December 8, 1638, Mr. Williams sells to twelve associates, as owners and co-proprietors, the lands purchased of Canonicus and Miantonomi, March 24, 1638, by the following paper called "The Initial Deed."

Memorandum, that I, R. W., having formerly purchased of Canonicus and Miantonomi, this our situation or plantation of New Providence, *viz.*, the two fresh rivers Wonas. and Moosh. and the grounds and meadows thereupon, in consideration of £30 received from the inhabitants of said place, do freely and fully, pass, grant and make over equal right and power of enjoying and disposing the same grounds and lands unto my loving friends and neighbours, S. W., W. A., T. J., R. C., J. G., J. T., W. H., W. C., I. O., F. W., R. W. and E. H., and such others as the major part of us shall admit into the same vote with us. As also, I do freely make and pass over equal right and power enjoying and disposing the said land and ground reaching from the aforesaid rivers into the great river Pawtuxet, with the grass and meadow thereupon, which was so lately given and granted by the two aforesaid sachems to me.

Witness my hand.

R. W.

At Providence, on the 22 of December, 1666, Mr. Williams reaffirms "The Initial Deed" with another "Memorandum," with this explanatory word as to the former: "This paper and writing \* \* \* differs not a tittle, only so is dated as near as we could guess about the time, and the names of the men written in the straight of time and haste are here explained by me." In "The Initial Deed," two Indian deeds are referred to; the first of lands "formerly purchased of Canonicus and Miantonomi;" the second of lands on the Pawtuxet River, "so lately given and granted." Within seven months of the date of Mr. Williams' purchase of the Providence Plantations, he has united with himself twelve men in the formation of a PROPRIETARY,—a voluntary association of persons, holding and conveying lands and in the call of the Plantations deciding by a majority

vote who should become associate proprietors and inhabitants and voters at New Providence.

Clearly a PROPRIETARY is not a DEMOCRACY. A Democracy rests on two foundation principles,—the right and freedom of entrance, of franchise, of exit, and the right of property with guaranteed titles. These fundamental or inalienable rights are expressed in the Declaration of Independence in the terms, "*Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*" Any curtailment of these rights is contrary to civil freedom; any infringement is tyranny.

Mr. Williams' primary purpose was to hold all his purchase in his own hands and to hold the admission of inhabitants subject to his personal control. The reason for the enlargement of the Proprietary, by adding twelve others, appears in a letter of Mr. Williams written in 1677:

As to my selling to them (the twelve) Pawtuxet and Providence: It is not true that I was such a fool to sell either of them, especially as W. H. saith 'like an Halter in a Market who gives most,' the Truth in the Holy Presence of the Lord is this.—Wm. H., Pretending Religion, wearied me with desires, that I should admit him and others into fellowship of my purchase. I yielded and agreed that the place should be for such as were destitute (especially for conscience sake) and that each person so admitted should pay 30/- country pay, towards a town stock and myself here £30 towards my charges, which I have had £28 in broken parcels in 5 years. Pawtuxet I parted with at a small addition to Providence (for then that monstrous bound or business of upstream without limits, was not thought of) Mr. Harris and the first 12 of Providence were restless for Pawtuxet and I parted with it upon the same terms, *viz.*, for the supply of the destitute, and I had a cow of them (then dear) when these 12 men (out of Pretence of Conscience & my desire of Peace) had gotten the power out of my hands, yet they still yielded to my grand desire of propagating a public interest, and confessed themselves but as ferooffees.

In point of time and in the relations of men we are now at the starting point of the great controversies which divided the first settlers at Providence, which created multitudes of social, civil and financial troubles and sorely threatened the very existence of the Plantations. Primarily, the long century trouble began with differences between William Arnold and William Harris on the one hand and Roger Williams on the other relative to the first purchase of Indian lands made by Mr. Williams, March 24, 1638. Mr. Williams claimed that these lands belonged to him personally "as much as the coat on his back," and that he had an absolute right to dispose of them as he pleased. Mr. Harris contended that he and the others who came with Mr. Williams to Providence were jointly interested in the settlement,—that it was not an Indian mission compound,

wherein Mr. Williams was to have absolute control, but a joint stock corporation in which all should have interests. While the Arnolds sympathized with Mr. Harris in his attitude as to land ownership, they had other differences with Mr. Williams. These related to the civil government of the Plantations. They had no confidence in Mr. Williams' ideas of founding a separate Colony and held that the allegiance of the people at Providence was due to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Three things must be done to bring to pass their clearly established ideas. The first was to join with William Harris in inducing Mr. Williams to join in the formation of a Proprietary of the lands included in the Williams Purchase, of March, 1638. This was accomplished by the "Initial Memorandum," of no date. Another act was to secure an amendment to the Indian memorandum of March 24, 1638. This was done under date of May 9, 1639, when Miantonomi, the sagamore, confirmed the memorandum of his chief, and declared the purchase extended "up the stream of Pawtucket and Pawtuxett without limmets wee might have for our use of cattell." As witnesses we have Roger Williams and Benedict Arnold. Now follows a bitter debate as to the meaning of the newly acquired territorial area, on which already the Arnolds, Harris and Carpenter have settled. As to Mr. Williams' feelings on the two propositions alluded to we have burning evidence in his own words written nearly forty years after the transactions.

William Harris and others of the first comers claimed that they were, by the original agreement, joint owners of the whole estate, and the fact that Mr. Williams admitted them to the corporate fellowship as "loveing friends" lends color to their claim. It is of interest to note that six of the twelve men, constituting the land syndicate of the Plantations, were dwelling in Salem at the time of the purchase,—Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Thomas Olney, Stukeley Westcott, Ezekiel Holliman and Robert Cole, who were dismissed from the Bay by order of the General Court, March, 1638. An interesting situation existed relative to the Plantations Estate. The corporation of thirteen men was in reality a trust with no beneficiary named. The succession was not personal to an owner and his heirs but a corporate succession to a perpetual body, continued in being by the vote of the entire body which had successors but no heirs. It is quite reasonable to believe that Mr. Williams intended that the town not then created should be the recipient of the benefits of the trust he had been compelled, as he says, to form. His generous nature admits of such an interpretation.

We meet squarely at this point the problem, What did Mr. Williams find? It clearly appears that at some early date he called the place of his settlement New Providence or Providence, just as he named William

Arnold's residence Pawtuxet, neither place being a town, only a residence. Only a few persons followed Mr. Williams to Providence,—not enough to warrant a settlement or the purchase of land. He had been advised by Gov. Winthrop to betake himself to the Narragansett country. Two reasons prompted this advice. One was to preserve friendly correspondence with Mr. Williams. Another was to use Mr. Williams as a medium for preserving the neutrality of the Narragansett Indians, or for securing their active alliance and assistance in the Pequot War, which had then virtually begun,—1636-1638. Mr. Williams fulfilled both relations and services most faithfully and his many letters to his "loving friend," Gov. Winthrop, and his personal services and sacrifices in behalf of the Bay Colony, in that trying period of Colonial existence, testify splendidly in favor of Mr. Williams' spirit of charity and forgiveness for those who sent him into the wilderness and his influence with Canonicus and his tribe in securing their aid for the complete overthrow of the warrior tribe of the Thames Valley.

Mr. Williams, on the other hand, had an eye single to his own protection as a settler at Providence in preserving the friendship of Gov. Winthrop, the leader of the Bay Colony, and of Canonicus and his tribe, on whose lands he had located. Either could and might dislodge him at any moment and for the slightest pretext. Still more the Bay Colony did not want Mr. Williams as a near neighbor. Their plan to ship him back to England with his family, was frustrated by his cunning and audacious braving the perils of an old-time New England winter. Plymouth wanted a white settlement on its western borders at Seekonk, but, advised by the Bay, Mr. Williams was directed to move on from his first chosen town site, just without the Bay Colony, and within the dominions of Massasoit, with whom he had spent the late winter months of 1636. Once without the bounds of Plymouth and the Bay Colonies, Mr. Williams, always an opportunist, understanding the hindrances the Bay Colony might interpose to his establishment of a rival Colony on Narragansett Bay, stays at Providence under the guidance of events. A few disaffected residents of Salem join him at Providence,—some of Anabaptist leanings. The great liberal revolution at Boston, led by Anne Hutchinson is at its climax in 1637, and the banishment of a colony of 300 Boston people, with whom, on the common ground of exile, he has a bond of sympathy, stirs Mr. Williams to action. Contact is made with Clarke and Coddington by the gravity of a Colonial purpose and the purchase of Aquidneck for the Boston exiles and the gift of the Providence Plantations to himself, opens the door to a new settlement at Providence in 1638. What shall be the outcome in government?—a monarchy, an aristocracy or a democracy, or neither. The would-be reformer of the Bay is the

leader,—he alone owns all the land,—his followers, few or many, are about him. He is for the time, master of the situation. In possession of a large estate—the Plantations—he must have occupants. If he opens a wide door of admission, the territory will be overrun by the Bay Colony, which looks with jealous eyes on Mr. Williams' movements. On inquiry, he finds that his "neighbors and loving friends," among whom are William Harris, William Carpenter and William Arnold, are opposed to "the face of magistracy" as he says. He also finds that some of his associates in the little group of settlers have a strong leaning towards the Bay Colony. His first decision is to retain the lands in his own name and stand as the sole judge of the character of inhabitants admitted. No one shall become a land holder and voter, without Mr. Williams' consent. We have seen how both plans were frustrated by his "neighbours and loving friends," and a land trust, or Proprietary, was formed in October, 1638. In order to form it, Mr. Williams is obliged to relinquish to the Associates his hold on the rich lands of Pawtuxet, with a territorial limit of the Plantations on the south and west of Sassafras Point, Mashapaug and Hipser Rock.

The business situation is one unknown in the annals of civil government. Mr. Williams held a large life estate,—the Plantations,—which legally terminated with his own life. This life estate he transfers by "the Initial Deed" to twelve associates as joint-owners with himself. This "Deed" is not a legal document as it is not dated, is not legally signed or witnessed and has no legal grantees and no beneficiary. The trust is a corporate one and not personal and is perpetual. Singular powers are conferred in the sentence, "and such others as the major part shall admit into the same vote with us." Thereby, this body of thirteen men, at first owning and controlling all the affairs temporal at Providence, decided on the admission of inhabitants, their qualifications, on the possession of the franchise, the civil policy, the magistracy, civil and criminal courts, taxes, etc. It was known by several titles as "the town," "the town fellowship," "Proprietors," "Masters of Families." This body of men and their later associates constituted the town of Providence until its incorporation by the General Assembly in 1649. The records known as the "town records" are an account of the doings of this body of Proprietors, which expired with the death of Judge William Staples, the last Proprietor and clerk, in 1848.

In the Bay Colony the franchise was exercised solely by male church members. In Plymouth Colony any male twenty-one years of age could vote. At Providence only members of the Proprietary,—married men, "maisters of families, incorporated together into a Town Fellowship," could vote. The outcome of this original and unique plan limited the

land ownership, the franchise, the business control and the ~~un~~infract of the trust to the thirteen men and their associates of the Proprietary. While destitute persons and those "distressed in conscience" were welcomed from all quarters of the Plantations, by Mr. Williams, once on the ground, they had no voice in the affairs of the town and no property they could call their own. As a matter of fact, while the records show an allotment of lands to various persons as early as 1640, no valid deed was executed until 1650. Among the rules made by the inhabitants incorporate was one requiring every person to be propounded one month before he could be made an inhabitant or townsman. On urgent necessity, a special meeting might be called to admit a person who had been propounded four days. Another rule prohibited every person from selling "his field or his lot, granted in our liberties, to any person, but an inhabitant, without consent of the town."

It is very evident that the organization formed by Mr. Williams was not a democratic town nor was the government a democracy, nor did it give or establish civil liberty, and in justice to the founder, it should be stated that he never made such claims. If we keep clearly in mind the chief motive that ruled Mr. Williams in his doings at Providence, it will appear that civil liberty was the very thing he labored to avoid. He had been exiled from the Bay. There was nothing in Church or State at Plymouth, Salem or Boston that suited his theological or civic ideas and temper. He had a sympathetic regard for "the destitute" and "distressed in consciences,"—men who like himself and John Smith, the miller, and Joshua Verin and Ezekiel Holliman and others of that class who sought an asylum, when there was little law, no magistrates and where individualism was supreme. Beyond that spontaneous generosity that took no thought of the morrow, lay the determined will of Mr. Williams that the Bay should not make a foray on his new Plantations, and thus destroy his last hope of a home on New England territory. The barrier he established was efficacious, in that a close corporation could and did hold property and its control and local government in its own sure possession. Its approval and denial were both absolute and, based as the decisions of the town trust were on property ownership and control, only a civil revolution could possibly overthrow the syndicate. Still further, the shield of final and full protection of the town trust existed in the contract of the Initial Deed, whereby the trust was its own beneficiary and always remained so, to such an extent, that the town of Providence never received a dollar of money or one acre of land from the Proprietary, founded by Roger Williams, October 8, 1638. Judge William B. Staples, the last clerk of the Proprietary, in the Annals of Providence, under date of 1843, wrote, "The Colonists (Providence) had undoubtedly

experienced the difficulties attendant on this form of government. They found it not only onerous to individuals, but wanting in that energy necessary to preserve the peace and ensure the prosperity of a growing community." The first modification of the corporate trust of estates, which Mr. Dorr declared to be "both permanent and corporeal," soon occurred as a result of general dissatisfaction within and without the town corporation. Before presenting the scheme of arbitration, we must discuss an important paper bearing directly on the civil and religious aspects of affairs at Providence. This paper is the first entry in Volume I, page 1, EARLY RECORDS OF THE TOWN OF PROVIDENCE, published by the authority of the city of Providence, 1892. The document bears no date.

We whose names are hereunder desirous to in habitt in the towne of prouidence do promise to subject (ourselves) inactive or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for publick good of or body in an orderly way by the maior consent of the (present) Inhabitants maisters of families In(corporated) together into a towne fellowship a[nd] others whome they shall admitt unto them  
only in civill things.

RICHARD SCOTT,  
WILLIAM (X) REYNOLDS,  
JOHN (X) FIELD,  
CHAD BROWNE,  
JOHN WARNER,  
GEORGE RICKA [RDS],  
EDWARDE COPE,  
THOMAS (X) ANGELL,  
THOMAS HARRIS,  
FRANCIS (X) WECHER,  
BENEDICT ARNOLD,  
JOSUA WINSOR,  
WILLIAM WICKENDEN.

This document was written by Richard Scott, though it has been credited to Mr. Williams. Many proofs show it to be in Mr. Scott's handwriting, as are the first three names. All above the name of Chad Browne was written by the same hand, with the same ink by the same quill, as will be easily decided by reference to the photograph.

Governor Arnold calls this paper "The Providence Compact," and is interpreted by him "as securing the rights of conscience inviolate." Mr. William B. Weeden styles it "Rhode Island's Magna Charta." Mr. Howard M. Chapin calls it "an agreement as to suffrage." Staples styles it "an agreement," and from it adduces the proposition of the establishment of a Christian community based upon the great principles of perfect religious liberty." Carpenter calls it a "compact" without remark. Dr. Backus, the earliest interpreter of this paper, calls it a "covenant," which

was made with all the inhabitants. Mr. Straus, one of the latest biographers (1894) writes: "The instrument doubtless was drawn up by Mr. Williams, as it bears the characteristic impress of his life purpose: to found a community which should forever be a refuge and shelter for the persecuted and oppressed." \* \* \* "It will be observed that the parties bind themselves '*only in civil things*,' thus securing the rights of conscience by excluding them from the domain and the jurisdiction of government." Bancroft, in loftier rhetoric and with a wider American vision, says: "A Commonwealth was built up where the will of the greater number of householders, or masters of families, and such others as they should admit into their town fellowship, should govern the State; yet '*only in civil things*;' God alone was respected as the Ruler of Conscience."

So much emphasis has been laid upon this first record of Providence in its bearing on the soul-liberty attitude of Roger Williams and the foundation principles of Providence Plantations, we are compelled to give it a thoroughly exhaustive study. As interpreted by most of Mr. Williams' biographers, it means all they claim for it. Viewed in its historic relations it has a far different meaning. It is an undated document, a fact that has allowed a wide latitude of values. It does not admit an earlier date than October 8, 1638,—for that was the day on which "*The maisters of families*" was "*Incorporated into a towne fellowship*." Chad Browne, one of the signers arrived in Boston from England, August, 1638, but the date of his coming to Providence is unrecorded. The paper is addressed to Mr. Williams and his twelve Associates, who, by a major vote, determined the admission of inhabitants. This position is made clear and certain by reference to the Initial Deed of October 8, 1638. The Instrument is a petition of thirteen men to become inhabitants of Providence, acquiring thereby for each a share in the lands of the corporation, a vote in the affairs of the town and a voice in the decisions as to the admission of future inhabitants.

This paper affirms loyalty *in active or passive obedience* "to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good" by the incorporated Proprietary, termed "a towne fellowship." Here we recognize a new and unusual source of legislative, executive and magisterial authority in civil affairs. It is neither monarchial nor democratic. It is the rather aristocratic and feudal. One is reminded of the manorial estates of England, with feudal laws, tenures, privileges and obligations. It is a singular but an interesting fact that no one of the Corporation at Providence had been made a freeman and voter in the Bay Colony and with the exception of Mr. Williams, no one owned land property, prior to

coming to Providence, while four of those whom Mr. Williams chose as members of "the towne fellowship" were ordered to leave the Bay "before the next Court," by the Court convened March 12, 1638,—Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Thomas Olney, Stukeley Westcott; a fifth, Robert Coles, was at Cambridge, June 5, 1638, and left the Colony with obligations unpaid while Ezekiel Holliman, the sixth of the twelve, appearing before the Court, March 12, 1638, "was referred by the Court to the ministers for conviction," "because hee did not frequent the public assemblyes, & for seducing many." It is quite likely that Mr. Weston staid at Salem into June, 1638, as the Bay Court sentenced his wife to sit in the bilboes, two hours at Cambridge and two hours at Salem, on June 5, 1638.

The most distinguishing feature of this instrument on Petition is the four words, "ONLY IN CIVILL THINGS," which are so emphatic in the thought of the writer as to occupy a distinct line by themselves. These four words limit the "orders on agreements," \* \* \* "for public good of or body," to civil affairs and thereby to determine the field of service and authority of the corporation. They also mark the essential difference between this paper and the subscription drawn by Mr. Williams and submitted to the judgment of his "loving friend," Gov. Winthrop, that had no limitation of authority and no distinct reference or inference to any other than civil rights.

It appears that neither in the Williams Subscription nor "The Initial Deed" is there any reference to individual civil or religious rights. Mr. Williams, as the leader in the settlement of Providence, has in no way indicated his desire to found a civil state on the basis of soul liberty. These matters have not occupied his attention up to this time. Had they done so he certainly would have "divulged his opinions" thereon. Had the phrase "only in civill things" appeared in "the Initial Deed" and "the Towne Fellowship" agreement of Oct., 1638, there would have been no need of inserting it in the Scott Petition. The absence of that declaration occasioned its later introduction and establishes its authorship in Richard Scott. His great concern has been to safeguard life and property against the incursions of the Bay Colony and his Proprietary has accomplished these ends. Richard Scott, the author of this Subscription is a Baptist as is also his wife Katherine, a sister of Anne Hutchinson of Massachusetts. They and others of the Baptist faith are soul-liberty people, who have come to New England for spiritual freedom. Dr. John Clarke, leader of the Colony of Rhode Island, had already planted a town on Aquidneck, on the foundations of civil and soul rights. Chad Browne, a Baptist, had arrived at Providence, joining Arnold Field, Harris, Weckes and Scott in a new declaration of the rights of freemen. These are the persons who insert the civil freedom plank in the platform of "the Towne

Fellowship," as a guarantee of the protection of both civil and soul liberty at Providence. The author of the declaration is Richard Scott, then a Baptist, later a Quaker, and the acceptance of these persons into the civil corporation commits Mr. Williams and his twelve associates to a new principle at Providence—toleration.

"ONLY IN CIVIL THINGS."

This pregnant sentiment contains the embryo and embodiment of civil and religious liberty in a community, Commonwealth or Nation. The limit of all civil acts or authority is to "civil things." "Civil things" in their last analysis include civil rights, duties and obligations, as well as civil liberty in its broad meaning; while civil liberty is natural liberty, under such restraints as are essential for the public good. Hon. Thomas Durfee, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, declared the statement to be a constitutional declaration of the right of soul liberty in its widest meaning, "covering not only faith and worship, but also freedom of thought and speech in every legitimate form."

It is well within our province as an historian to relate that the proprietary, established by Mr. Williams in 1638, assumed two functions; one was the admission of members to the "Town Fellowship" and the disposal of lands; the second was the exercise of rights, duties and prerogatives of a town government. There had been no action of the settlers in establishing any form of local control. Mr. Williams says many times that the Providence men were opposed to laws and magistracy, many of them declaring against the formation of a church, in that civil or ecclesiastical orders and laws were not consistent with individual freedom. Mr. Williams and his followers hereby represented the extreme radicalism and reaction from the superior claims of authority as practised by the Stuarts. It was the doctrine of individualism in church and State, in so far as it made each man the absolute judge and governor of his own opinions and acts, with no special regard to the rights of others and, withal, a general denial of civil authority. This mental attitude readily accounts for Mr. Williams' defiant attitude of church and State in the bay. He and his disciples at Salem and Providence regarded the absolute freedom of the man as superior to the combined opinions and interests of men, as manifest in town, church or colony. This absolute independency of the individual of all civil, social and ecclesiastical restraints in matters of opinion and action was styled "freedom of conscience," soul liberty and like terms. What Mr. Williams calls "a distressed conscience" had no reference whatever to religious liberty or to civil freedom. Any barriers to the free exercise of individual thought, expression or action was an interference with conscience liberty.

Upon the pretense of religion or conscience, Mr. Williams claimed peculiar privileges and powers above others in civil concerns, and

challenged all manner of authority not in harmony with his opinions. "Opinion" was the synonym of "conscience"—the individual man was superior to the State.

The next step for Mr. Williams, after the assumption of absolutism in individualism was a logical one. It was to make himself the ruling conscience of the community of which he was a part, and this he did in so far as associated action would allow. Holding this view of Mr. Williams' position, we can easily understand his whole course at Providence from 1636 till his death. His acts polarize at personal individualism. "Religious liberty," "civil liberty," "conscience liberty," "distressed in conscience," "soul liberty," may all be translated into the Williams vernacular, "my own absolute, unlimited individualism." On no other principle can Mr. Williams' public acts from 1630 to 1683 be made to harmonize.

"The Town Fellowship," as established by Mr. Williams, made no mention of things civil or ecclesiastical, but in his mind it included both. Hence all matters of local interest and action came within the operations of the proprietary. Sometimes it calls itself "the town," sometimes "our body," sometimes "masters of families," sometimes the "town government." But whatever its name, it was until 1648 the one thing—The Land Trust—The Williams Proprietary. The records are meagre and most perplexing. The first dated meeting was held July 27, 1642. Only four dated town meetings were held before 1648. Hon. William R. Staples, the last clerk of the proprietary and later Chief Justice of the State, writes: "It is quite evident that there existed in this little community a great distrust and jealousy of delegated power." \* \* \* "The new system, by its weakness and lack of energy, gave rise to difficulties, which to some of the inhabitants seemed inherent and unsurmountable. The great liberty which some enjoyed was abused by some to licentiousness. From the denial of the right of government to interfere in matters of conscience, some claimed the right to do with impunity whatsoever the said conscience dictated. Others were at the time accused of denying all power in magistrates."

It needs no argument to show that in any age the doctrine of an unrestrained opinion, backed by a resolute will, is hostile to the tenets of civil freedom and subversive of law and magistracy. The working of the French revolution is a forceful illustration of an unlicensed and an unfettered "liberty of conscience." While the principle of absolute right inheres in the individual, the State derives its authority by the transference of individual rights to the civic body called the State. The State can exercise itself along lines determined by constitutional guarantees, conferred by a major vote of the individuals, admitted to the franchise.

The Joshua Verin case—the only one of record—is complete proof of

the weakness and incompetency of the Williams individualistic policy. Most writers and apologists of Mr. Williams cite the Verin case in proof of the establishment and operations of Simon-pure religious liberty at Providence. Let us study the case. It seems that Joshua Verin was living in Salem at the time of Mr. Williams' departure and joined him in the summer of 1636, being one of the five persons who accompanied him to Providence. By the Hopkins location of town lots, Joshua Verin's lot adjoined that of Mr. Williams on the north, and he was consequently his nearest neighbor.

Philip Verin, Joshua's father, was a leading citizen of Salem, a deacon of the Salem church and an officer of the town in association with its leading citizen, Governor John Endicott. Joshua's brother, Hilliard Verin, held chief offices in the old town and was collector of the port. The family were large land holders—Joshua holding lands in his own right in 1635 and later.

The land records of Providence show that Joshua Verin owned one hundred acres of land in this place, and this, with other evidence, establishes the fact that he was a member of the Town Fellowship, a voter, and consequently a married man with children. As Verin was a companion of Mr. Williams and his next-door neighbor at Providence, it is probable that Mr. Williams approved his membership in the town society.

The event, which has given young Verin distinction, occurred probably in 1639, as the "Town Fellowship" dates from October, 1638. There are three reliable records as follows: The first is found on page 4, volume i., *Early Records of the Town of Providence*, and is in the handwriting of Roger Williams. It reads as follows:

The 21 die of ye 3 month (no year).

*It was agreeed that Joshua Verin upon ye breach of a covenant for restraining of yc liberty of conscience shall be with held from the liberty of voting till he shall declare ye contrary.*

The next record under date of the 10th of 4th month (no year) confirms "several portions of grasse and medow" to "or neighbour Throckmorton neighbour Grene neighbour Harris Joshua Verin neighbour Arnold and neighbour Williams."

On May 22 Mr. Williams wrote the following story of Verin to Governor Winthrop, of Boston:

Sir, we have bene long afflicted by a young man, boysterous & desperate, Philip Verin's sonn of Salem, who, as he hath refused to heare the word with us (wch we molested him not for) this twelve month, so because he could not draw his wife, a gracious & modest woman, to the same ungodliness with him, he hath troden her under foote tyrannically & brutishly; wch she and we long bearing, though with his furious blows she went in danger of life, at the last the major vote of us discard him

from our civil freedom, or disfranchise, &c.; he will have justice (as he clamours) at other courts; I wish he might, for a fowle & slanderous & brutish carriage, wch God hath delivered him up unto; he will hale his wife with ropes to Salem, where she must needes be troubled & troublesome as differences yet stand. She is willing to stay & live with him or elsewhere, where she may not offend &c. I shall humbly request tht this item be accepted & he no way countenanced until (if need be) I further trouble you.

It will be noted that Mr. Williams in this detailed statement of complaints against young Verin as related to Governor Winthrop makes no mention of his violation of his principle of soul liberty on Verin's part. He makes out a case of assault and battery, by a "boysterous and desperate" young man upon "a gracious & modest woman"—his wife. For that reason and that alone, according to Mr. Williams, "the major vote of us discard him from our civill freedom." Here then is a criminal act. The criminal and his victim are his next-door neighbors, living not fifty yards from his own house. Mr. Williams knew the Verin family at Salem. He knew Joshua and his wife. They were probably members of Mr. Williams' church at Salem—undoubtedly persons "disturbed in conscience" and destitute. The latter fact appears in a letter of Mr. Williams. It seems that Joshua Verin owed Governor Winthrop a debt of eight pounds sterling, which he had been unable to collect before Verin left Salem, in 1636. Finding himself unable to collect the debt, he sent the claim to Mr. Williams, offering him one-half of the bill as his commission for collection. Mr. Williams wrote to Governor Winthrop, "I shall be urgent with him." It is quite possible, in fact very probable, that a young man, just married, proud spirited, and not altogether as spiritual minded as Mr. Williams, who found it a hard job to build a cabin and support a family in a wilderness, might be tempted to be "boisterous" and possibly "desperate" in the presence of an "urgent" dinner for the payment of an eight-pound debt, especially if he had reason to believe that half of the debt would remain in the hands of the collector.

The third record of the Verin case is found in Winthrop's history of New England, and is Mr. Winthrop's story of the affair:

At Providence, also, the devil was not idle. For whereas, at their first coming thither, Mr. Williams and the rest did make an order, that no man should be molested for his conscience, now men's wives and children and servants claimed liberty hereby to go to all religious meetings, though never so often, or though private, upon the week days; and because one Verin refused to let his wife go to Mr. Williams so oft as she was called for, they required to have him censured. But there stood up one Arnold (William), a witty man of their own company, and withstood it, telling them that when he consented to that order, he never intended it should extend to the breach of any ordinance of God such as the subjection of wives to their husbands, &c., and gave divers solid reasons

against it. Then one Greene replied that if they should restrain their wives, &c., all the women of the country would cry out of them, &c. Arnold answered him thus: Did you pretend to leave the Massachusetts because you would not offend God to please men and would you now break an ordinance of God to please women? Some were of opinion that if Verin would not suffer his wife to have her liberty, the church should dispose her to some other man, who would use her better. Arnold told them that it was not the woman's desire to go so oft from home, but only Mr. Williams's and others. In conclusion, when they would have censured Verin, Arnold told them that it was against their own order, for Verin did that he did out of conscience; and their order was that no man should be censured for his conscience.

According to Governor Winslow, the Verin party won in this celebrated case and Verin escaped censure. According to Mr. Williams' letter and the town record, Verin was deprived of his vote in the town-fellowship "till he shall declare to the contrary." The most remarkable view of this case is the official record as it appears in the Providence records and Mr. Williams' detailed account as related to Governor Winthrop, to which the Governor makes no reference in his summary. The verdict is "ye breach of a covenant of the liberty of conscience." Setting aside the epithets and character which he bestows on his companion and neighbor, let us analyze the situation to discover the offence. It would appear that Mr. Williams held meetings in which any one could "heare the word with us." Verin did not attend. His wife did. Mr. Verin, for unknown reasons, objected to her frequent absence from home and companionship, which he had a perfect right to do. In those early days wives were admonished "to be in subjection to their own husbands." "If they will learn anything let them ask their own husbands at home." "To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, obedient to their own husbands."

Mr. Verin's offence on "the liberty of conscience" then was his desire to enjoy a husband's privileges in his own home with his wife and children, and his earnest efforts to secure his rights. The claim of interference with "the covenant of the liberty of conscience" is too frivolous to be harbored for a moment. No question had been raised in any remote way relating itself to that principle. The truth is that Mr. Williams set his resolute will to the task of securing Mrs. Verin's adhesion to his views. In this sturdy purpose he ran counter to Mr. Verin's ideas as to the home and social duties of his wife. Probably Mr. Williams' "urgent" calls for the payment of the Winthrop debt of eight pounds may have disturbed and destroyed friendly relations with a spirited young neighbor. At all events, the family-neighbor quarrel is a serious affair—so serious that it is brought before "The Town Fellowship" for consideration and solution. Mr. Williams makes one record of that event and Governor Winthrop another. But, assuming that Mr. Williams is correct in his

record and letter, we are forced to the conclusion that Mr. Verin was safely within his rights as a member of the "Town Fellowship" and a citizen of Providence in objecting to Mr. Williams' solicitations and demands as to Mrs. Verin's attendance on his meetings. There is no evidence that any question of conscience was involved, and if there was the Scott amendment to the civil compact precluded all matters not "civil" from consideration by the governing body. It is a clear contradiction and a strange traverse of the sentiment and principle "*only in civil things*" to declare illegality and criminality to a "breach of the covenant for restraining liberty of conscience" when conscience questions are absolutely excluded from the domain of Town Fellowship consideration. Joshua Verin's conscience claimed protection equally with that of Mr. Williams or Mrs. Verin, or even both combined. In fact an interference with Joshua Verin's conscience liberty by Mr. Williams was in absolute contradiction to his oft-asserted claim of soul liberty at Providence. If his offence was outside the limit of "civil things" it had no right of recognition by the civil body. Such recognition would be a violation of the first law of a Democratic state. If, as Mr. Williams asserts in his letter to Mr. Winthrop, Verin whipped his wife, it was a case of assault and battery and should have been treated in a criminal court by a criminal procedure. But as there was no civil government at Providence, no court, no civil officer and no laws, no action could be brought for the people opposed "the face of magistracy."

It is estimated that there were thirty families on the plantations in 1639. Several of the latest arrivals from Salem, Massachusetts, had Anabaptist leanings. The time seems to be near for the formation of a religious society. The leader and founder is an ordained minister, with a few years of experience in Massachusetts as a teacher of religious truth. It must be assumed that he has in some way exercised his gifts at Providence. Although we have no clear record of the fact, there are many reasons for thinking that the men and women of early days were quite willing to excuse attendance on Mr. Williams' expository preaching and praying, in their cultivation of the fields, the pursuit of fish and game for food, or the making log houses comfortable for family life. The Bay Colony seems to furnish the first religious propaganda at Providence, converting priest and people to a new sectary, hated and rejected by Puritan orthodoxy. We must study the new movement at Providence through Massachusetts authorities. Winthrop writes:

At Providence things grew still worse, for a sister of Mrs. Hutchinson, the wife of one Scott (Richard), being infected with Anabaptistry, and going last year (1638) to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was taken (or rather emboldened) by her to make open profession thereof, and accordingly was rebaptized by one Holymen (Ezekiel), a poor man, late of Salem. Then Mr. Williams rebaptized him and some ten more. They also denied the baptism of infants, and would have no magistrates.

To confirm the statement of Governor Winthrop, Rev. Hugh Peters, minister of the church at Salem, wrote that "their great censure" was past upon Roger Williams and his wife, John Throgmorton and his wife, Stukeley Westcott and his wife, Mary Holliman and the widow Reves, and that all but two of these were rebaptized. Backus adds the names of William Wickenden, Chad Brown and Gregory Dexter. Richard Scott, who with his wife afterwards became Quakers, writes:

I walked with him (R. W.) in the Baptists way about 3 or 4 months, in which time he brake from the society, and declared at large the grounds and reasons for it; that their baptism could not be right because it was not administered by an apostle. After that he set upon a way of *seeking* (with two or three of them that had dissented with him) by way of preaching and praying; and there he continued a year or two, till two of the three left him, that which took most with him was to get honor amongst men.

Later in 1639 Governor Winthrop writes again:

At Providence matters went on after the old manner. Mr. Williams and many of his company, a few months since, were in all haste rebaptized and denied communion with all others, and now he was come to question his second baptism, not being able to derive the authority of it from the apostle, otherwise than by the ministers of England (whom he judged to be ill authority), so as he conceived God would raise up some apostolick power. Therefore he bent himself that way, expecting (as was supposed) to become an apostle; and having, a little before, refused communion with all, save his own wife, now he would preach to and pray with all comers. Whereupon some of his followers left him and returned back from whence they went.

In 1641 Governor Winthrop adds of the Providence planters:

Divers of them professed Anabaptists, and would not wear any arms, and denied all magistracy among Christians, and maintained that there were no churches since those founded by the apostles and evangelists, nor could any be, nor any pastors ordained, nor seals administered but by such; and that the church was to want these all the time she continued in the wilderness, as yet she was.

In 1649 Mr. Williams enters his own opinion of the doctrine, which he accepted and held for a few months:

At Seekonk a great many have lately concurred with Mr. John Clarke and our Providence men about the point of a new baptism and the manner by dipping; and Mr. John Clarke had been there lately \* \* \* and hath dipped them. I believe their practise comes nearer the first practise of our great Founder, Christ Jesus, than other practises of our religion do, and yet I have not satisfaction, neither in the authority by which it is done; nor in the manner; nor in the prophesies concerning the rising of Christ's Kingdom after the desolations by Rome.

In passing from the testimony, it may be stated that Mr. Callender raises a doubt as to Mr. Williams' membership in the embryo church at Providence. He says, writing in 1736, "the most ancient inhabitants now alive, some of them above eighty years old, who personally knew Mr. Williams, and were well acquainted with many of the original settlers never heard that Mr. Williams formed the Baptist church there, but always understood that Mr. Browne, Mr. Wickenden or Wiginton, Mr. Dexter, Mr. Olney, Mr. Tillinghast, &c., were the first founders of the church." Moses Brown, writing in 1836, at the age of ninety-six, says, "Doct. Edwards on inquiry among our old people concluded that Mr. Williams was never considered, first, an elder, but that Chad Brown was the first elder in the Baptist church." And Neale says that "his church hereupon crumbled to pieces, every one following his own fancy, and the worship of God came to be generally neglected." As to any and all of the matters relating to the early history of the First Baptist Church of Providence the truth must be told that not a vestige of a record can be found for one hundred and thirty years and the historian must gather from outside sources such stories and traditions as happen to be preserved. However that may be as to the church or town records, we have sufficient data to establish certain conclusions as to the conditions existing at Providence during its inchoate life. The following propositions seem to us to be supported by the facts:

I. Roger Williams, a Puritan non-conformist minister, about thirty years of age, an exile from the Bay Colony, finds a place of safety for himself and family at Providence, then Moshassuck, in June, 1636.

II. He is joined at Providence by several "destitute and distressed" persons, but he has no purpose to found a town—rather an asylum.

III. His teachings and acts in the Plymouth and Bay Colonies, during a period of five years, did not show the qualities of a safe leader, nor knowledge of the principles and operations of civil or church government.

IV. The issues made by Mr. Williams in the Bay Colony had only a remote reference to matters of civil and religious liberty.

V. The accession of a number of settlers at Providence and the coming of the Aquidneck colonists led Mr. Williams to secure Providence Plantations of Miantonomi, chief sachem of the Narragansetts, holding the lands in his own name, March 24, 1638.

VI. In October, 1638, on the persistent solicitation of his associates he formed a land copartnership, receiving twelve settlers into the Town Fellowship or Proprietary.

VII. Males, married, heads of families, were the only persons eligible to membership, to be elected by a major vote of the whole body. After a name had been propounded one month. Lands could not be resold without consent of the land company.

VIII. No civil organization or town was formed, no principles of civil policy were laid down, no laws were made for the common good, no magistracy was established, no democratic franchises existed, no town officers elected.

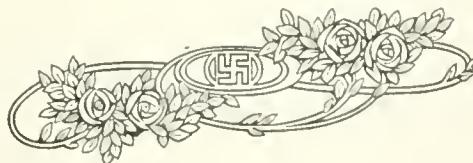
IX. In 1639 Richard Scott and twelve others asked to be admitted to the Town Fellowship, pledging active or passive obedience "ONLY IN CIVIL THINGS." So far as the records show these thirteen persons were the only ones of the Fellowship subject to that limitation. This petition, sometimes erroneously called "*The Providence Compact*," was written by Richard Scott and addressed to Roger Williams and his associates of the Town Fellowship as the ground of their union.

X. The chief function of the Town Fellowship was to safeguard the admission of inhabitants and to apportion to accepted persons lands for home and for cultivation. This land corporation exercised some of the functions of a town government, by general consent.

XI. The single case of discipline of a member of the "Town Fellowship," Joshua Verin, for a breach of the covenant for restraining the liberty of conscience" may be interpreted as a malicious interference with the rights of the individual or a lamentable looseness in justice. If we accept Governor Winthrop's testimony, it was the invasion of a civil right, with the right vindicated. If we accept Mr. Williams' explanation, it was a case of assault and battery falsely judged on the ground of a false issue. Either horn of the dilemma is a dangerous instrument.

XII. Mr. Williams' sudden conversion to Anabaptistry shows an unsettled mind on theological matters, while his speedy change to "Seekerism,"—an ancient form of Agnosticism—and according to Mr. Richman "the *ne plus ultra* of religious individualism," is evidence of his continued indetermination in religious matters.

XIII. The religious body organized at Providence, according to Governor Winthrop, opposed magistracy in civil affairs, was non-resistant, objected to the use of arms, and maintained there were no churches since those founded by the apostles, nor any pastors nor sacraments. This position agrees with civil polity established by Mr. Williams, which regarded all magisterial functions as hostile to church and state.





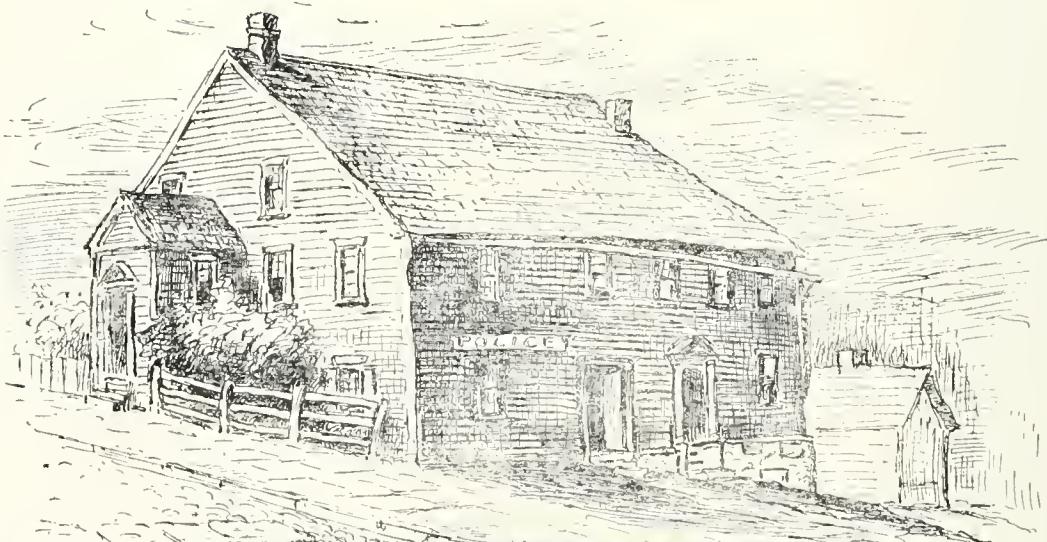
## CHAPTER XI

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PROVIDENCE TOWN AND PROPRIETARY







Old Town House - Providence  
Built 1723 Demolished 1860

Henry A. Barker 1912  
after Water Color by  
Edw L. Peckham - 1860.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PROVIDENCE TOWN AND PROPRIETARY.

In 1649, thirteen years after its discovery by the Arnolds, Carpenter and Williams, ancient Moshassuck receives a town charter from the General Assembly, meeting at Warwick, and is authorized to organize a town called Providence and to set up a town government. Hitherto all civil authority has been vested in a private corporation, the PROPRIETARY of 1638. In its incapacity for "magistracy" and in its ability to retard the growth of the town it was a crowning success. It was equally successful in keeping lands, finances and public policies under its control for more than a century. The attempt to administer government by "Arbitration," tried out in 1640, was also a lamentable failure, as all such voluntary operations are forever doomed to be. Government, stable and efficient, must rest on foundations of granite, not on the "hay, wood and stubble" of good wishes. Nine weary, troubled years followed, and Providence took up the duties of civil government. The rule of "Masters of Families" has been transferred to "the free inhabitants" of Providence, "to make and ordain such civil orders and constitutions, to inflict such punishments upon transgressors," as such "free inhabitants" may make, provided that "the said Laws, constitutions and punishments for the civil government of the Plantation" are legally adjusted to English government. But "the free inhabitants" of Providence are the owners of land and the land property of the town is owned by the Proprietors. Hence the incorporation of Providence simply transfers the town control from social to economic or property control. Political equality as well as liberty were vested in the hands of land-owners. Landless men had no voice in the government of the new town, could not vote or hold office. Even the "quarter-rights men" were not freemen in their limited land ownership. It was as late as May 15, 1658, that a town order was passed "that all those that enjoy land in the jurisdiction of this town are freemen." It cannot be too clearly stated or understood that from October, 1638, to May 15, 1658, a period of twenty years, the civil community at Providence was in the absolute governance of "Masters of families" and that it passed to all land-holders in 1658. The original right of franchise was vested in headship of a family. The next stage was its enlargement to include all land holders.

In addition to the oligarchy of freemen created by the law of land ownership was the adoption of the custom of primogeniture, which vested the franchise in the oldest son of a free-holder. Here we have the

adoption of the old Norman law of aristocracy as a feature of oligarchic franchise at Providence. In this political bestowment we find a principle absolutely at variance with the doctrine of civil and religious liberty. While the Proprietary based citizenship on the possession of lands, it had it in its power to open wide the doors of civil liberty and religious liberty to those struggling for a broader freedom. But, as we have seen, it did not fulfill such a benevolent mission. On the other hand, it exercised its prerogative of exclusive privilege for the chosen few and for the rejection of the poorer class, however worthy the individuals might be. John Smith, the miller, the first manufacturer of Providence, who came with Roger Williams, never was allowed to vote, and Pardon Tillinghast does not appear among the fifty-four privileged proprietors of the town. In 1655, there were only forty-two colony freemen to exercise the franchise, and in 1676, there were not over 500 people in Providence. It was about 1660, that the primogeniture feature was adopted in order to restrict the number of free land holders and to the original land ownership its continuance in the family line, the oldest son coming into the full voting right of his father's estate. This right of the eldest son persisted until the adoption of the Constitution of Rhode Island in 1842. Mr. Stokes states that from the formation of the Proprietary until 1842, "no legal vote was cast in a Providence town meeting by any freeman who was not a freeholder in his own right or the eldest son of one."

While civil liberty was thus handicapped at Providence by the exclusion of a great body of the inhabitants from the franchise and a larger body from land ownership, it was also greatly hindered by the absolute neglect of education. A century and a half passed before a public school opened its doors to the youth of the town,—a period of ignorance and of comparative poverty. At the same time religion was in a poor estate and languished for want of an educated ministry and the ideals of an educated people.

The town of Providence of 1649 was a legalized proprietary with civil functions annexed. The control of public and land affairs remained in the hands of Olney, Harris and their friends, as before the charter. The duties of the town clerk and the proprietors' clerk were vested in the same individuals for seventy years. Mr. Williams had left Providence in 1647 to carry on his trading house venture at Narragansett, and did not return until 1653. The Arnolds, Carpenter and Cole were living under Massachusetts rule at Pawtuxet and paid taxes to the Bay Colony. Thockmorton had gone to New York, where he founded Throgg's Neck. Joshua Verin no longer vexed Mr. Williams, as he had left the country. Francis Wickes, John Greene, John Warner and Ezekiel Holliman had cast in their lots with Sam Gorton, at Warwick. Richard Scott was at

Land's End, raising a Baptist-Quaker family. Widows Reeves, Tiler, Daniels and Sears had no votes in the town. Other names on the proprietors' roll had no legal existence in Providence. A half dozen men carried the civil and religious liberties of the town safely tied up in their ancient voluminous pocket-books. Aristocracy asked no favors and granted none. Civil and spiritual democracy was an untried, undetermined, unreality at Providence. The specific purpose of its controlling forces was not law or liberty—it was land, property, wealth, individual, corporal. The creations of theorists and idealists of a later day have invested the hard facts of ancient Providence history with a dress and a halo absolutely out of harmony with their real character and the motives that inspired it. More's Utopia, Harry Vane's fifth monarchy and Roger Williams' ideas of civil and soul freedom died in the brain cells of dreamers.

For a fuller discussion of the proprietary and town relations, reference is made to *THE FINANCES AND ADMINISTRATION OF PROVIDENCE, 1636-1901*, by H. K. Stokes, and to *PROVIDENCE PROPRIETORS AND FREE-HOLDERS*, by Henry C. Dow.

Providence has in late years published its *EARLY RECORDS* in a series of twenty volumes. These are ostensibly the records of proprietary and town clerks, but it needs an exceptional critic to discern which is town and which proprietary for a period of eighty years. It is most manifest that pages one to five of volume i. are from Mr. Williams' memoranda, and illustrate his usual traits of incompleteness, although we have no evidence that he was ever chosen proprietary clerk. The names of persons who served as clerks for town and proprietary are Thomas Olney, Gregory Dexter, John Sayles, Shadrack Manton, John Whipple, Daniel Abbott, Thomas Olney (2nd) and Richard Waterman. The town clerks, after 1718 to 1830, were Richard Waterman, Nicholas Tillinghast, James Angell, Theodore Foster, Daniel Cooke, George Tillinghast, Nathan W. Jackson and Richard M. Field. With the destruction of the proprietors' records by fire, the names of the clerks of that body since 1718 have been lost with the exception of William R. Staples, the last officer of that body.

The town government instituted in 1649 consisted of a town council of six men, a town clerk, a treasurer, a constable and sergeant. Three members of the council were elective by the freemen and three others were the deputies from Providence in the General Assembly, chosen by the freemen of the whole colony. Town and colony were represented in the units of town government, a singular and unusual combination that existed from 1649 to 1664. As Providence, at the latter date, did not exceed over two hundred inhabitants, and as the proprietary assumed the financial control of the town, there was little of communal business left for the town council. It is safe to state that the *de facto*

government was in the property holders, although the executive machinery was vested in the town, but was exercised in small measure by either town or proprietary. Individualism, social, civil, economic, held sway. Democracy ruled on the clam and oyster beds, over the bay fisheries, the wild fowl of the waters and the game of the forests. All else was an oligarchy, aristocratic autocracy, with restricted executive force. Harris and Olney were lords of the manor and exercised their Teutonic birthright in harmony with their ancestral birthright. So exacting were the rules of the corporation that for many years the use of the town common was limited to the members of the proprietary.

References are often made to courts in the early days, but these in most cases were assumed powers of the corporation in matters of land disputes and local differences of various sorts. These primitive courts conducted by local or colonial magistrates sought to settle, by the easiest and most reasonable ways, the questions of law and equity arising in the community. The court of arbitrators ended in a farcical attempt to allay a "hubbub," and the constable's men had little terrors for the men who ranged the Providence forests with their old bell-muzzles.

Fines and penalties were often adjudged, but seldom executed. Constables and sergeants were too timid and the guilty parties too resolute and too well armed in defence for safe procedure.

Taxation was twofold, in service and in money. Improvements waited on individual initiative or community needs. Wapwagsit bridge was built by a bridge-building bee of Providence "neighbours" who needed a public crossing of the Moshassuck at that point. Thomas Olney wanted it and it was built by citizen labor for free citizen use. Where the public needs and private ends harmonized, service was at hand. Where it assumed a compulsory character, with small compensation, if any, it was steadfastly avoided. "Masters of families" might want roads built to their lands, but excluded inhabitants, without lands or votes, had no use for roads, except Indian trails, and could not be forced to build them. The real democracy at Providence had nothing, did nothing and cared nothing. Even after the enlargement of the franchise in 1656, public duties were avoided and taxes shunned "to the ruin of government for want of the execution of the laws." The courts were impotent to enforce orders against delinquents. Public service was voidable at the choice of the servant, and was never sought until fees or salaries were made commensurate with the duties imposed.

Money taxation in Providence was a plant of slow growth. The first tax of record was assessed in 1652, payable at the will of the persons assessed. Taxes were assessed as occasions required, sometimes by the town council, the constable, the overseer of the poor and special assessors. The returns of property valuation were required of owners by the law

of 1667, and the rate-makers apportioned the taxes upon the taxpayers' returns. Taxable property in Providence until 1660 was confined to lands and live stock, while in earlier days taxes were assessed solely on live stock. The development of a tax system was slow and the early results in collections unsatisfactory in the extreme. During the first years of town taxation, the payment was optional with property owners. Many freemen "brought in" their taxes voluntarily, while others declined payment and evaded the collector. Law had no enforcement. Providence was a non-taxpayers' paradise. Even colonial legislation was ignored and neglected when the raising and expenditure of money was involved. Such a democracy has always been popular with certain classes of political economists.

The joint records of the proprietary and the town of Providence till 1719 are a study for the understanding of early history. These records will never have great value until properly edited. Volume one of the town records contains deeds recorded between 1651 and 1681 by Clerks Whipple, Manton and Thomas Olney, Jr. Volume two contains land titles and the minutes of meetings, including events between 1642 and 1661. As the freemen and the proprietors were *one* and the same body, legislation as to lands and to things civil and judicial are constantly intermingled on the pages of succeeding volumes.

The town meetings were held at such times as the land or other business might demand and at such places as seemed most convenient. The Roger Moury tavern was used October, 1657, for which the town paid "is: 6p. out of ye Treasurie for this daies fireing & house roome." In April, 1674 John Whipple, tavern-keeper, was paid "one shilen for house-rent." The Whipple tavern was central and seems to have been a favorite for town meetings. The house of Hugh Bewit, 1664, was also used by the town. In 1664 the engagement of Roger Williams "for Clabordes & Nailes for the building of a Town howse by the Towne is remitted." The moderator was chosen at each meeting, but the town clerk was chosen annually. Town meetings were not popular gatherings. Under date of October 1, 1657, the following record appears: "Ordered yt because of ye often & present greate difficultie of getting ten to make a Towne meeeting yt if upon lawfull warning seven onely meet their Meeting shall be lawfull." The moderator engaged the clerk and the clerk all the other town officers. All the town meetings, transactions as to lands, sales, exchanges, bounds, etc., occupy a large place in the records. The meeting is often converted into a court, but the differences of function do not appear. Two publications of marriages were made to the town at town meeting and also posted "upon some eminent tree in ye Towne streete, after wch publication the marriage shall be lawfull, after a fortnight, if no Excep-

tions Come in within ye fortnights time. It, In extraordinary cases persons may in a shorter."

Among the town orders appear: "To erect a town caige;" repealing a town law which restrained men from selling wines or liquors to the Indians by wholesale; that a cow-pen be built; a verdict on the death of Margaret Goodwin, "We find so neare as we can judge that either the terribleness of the crack of thunder on the second of the third moneth of 16[ ] or the coldness of the night, being she was naked, did kill her;" "to take care yt no Indians sit down to Inhabit in ye Neck;" Thomas Arnold was given seven days to remove the stones he had rolled into the highway; a common was laid out between Bailey's Cove and the Great Swamp; the sergeant was fined five shillings for not attending town meeting and town court; from 1660 frequent reference is made to the four-mile line, the seven-mile line and the twenty-mile line. The story of these boundary lines should be told.

Fox Hill at Fox Point on Providence Neck was the starting point or goal from which all the general surveys began. This was practically the eastern bound of the sachems' deed on the line of the Pawtucket river, while the southern boundary line was the Pawtuxet river. The four-mile was located in a westerly direction from Foxes Hill and ran north and south, with Hipses Rock as the four-mile bound of the Williams deed of 1638. The memorandum of 1639 increased the territorial limits of occupation as understood by all, opening the valleys of the Pocassett, the Pawtuxet, the Womasquatucket and the Pawtucket to the settlers. The Harris-Williams controversy arose over the interpretation to be given to the postscript deed. Harris claimed that the deed should be interpreted in its broadest sense to extend as far to the west as the Shawomet deed, which was twenty miles to the Connecticut line, and including the lands and streams north of Warwick. The details of the debate on this vexed question cannot be stated in our brief story. It is enough to state that the proprietors won out against Mr. Williams' protest and most earnest labors for twenty years. Their first victory is recorded in the early records of Providence, volume ii, page 129, as follows: "*It is ordered by this present Assembly that the Boundes of this Towne of Providence, shall be sett Eight Miles up the stremme of Pau-tuckett River beginning at the Hill called Foxes Hill and upon a straight line west Seven Miles from the aforesaid Foxes Hill.*" At the end of the seven miles west from Fox Hill, the boundary line of Providence was "to goe upon A Strait line North unto pautucket River and upon A Straight line South unto pautuxett Rivers." This seven-mile line became the eastern boundary of the towns of Scituate, Gloucester and Burrillville, and remains so.

At about the same time, March 26, 1660, the town of Providence

voted to purchase the lands for twenty miles west between the two rivers, Pawtuxet and Woonsquatucket. Earlier in the year, Thomas Olney, Sr., William Wickenden, John Sayles and Thomas Hopkins had been ordered to meet the Pawtuxet men, Harris, Field, the Arnolds and others, to consider "what hath been lately done with the Indians concerning our plantations." It is certain that an agreement was made with Canjainquecut for the purchase of the whole territory of Rhode Island north of Warwick and west of the seven-mile line, although there is no record of the purchase or of the price paid. In confirmation of it, it was ordered on April 27, 1660, "that this Towne shall give unto Canjainquant's son, Ga'au'a-quomitt, 30 shillings in peague, provided he Sett his hand unto the deede which his father Subscribed in owneing his father's Act." On the same day, Thomas Walling, Henry Brown, William Harris, William Wickenden, John Fenner and Daniel Brown were chosen to "sett the Boundes of or plantation Twenty Miles from Foxes Hill, Westward up in the Country." Each man to receive four shillings a day for his work, with liberty to hire one Indian as a guide. At this time the number of proprietors was increased from fifty-four to one hundred and one, the maximum number. A purchase right was valued at twenty shillings in peag. If the money was not paid within a specified time, the land right was forfeited to the proprietary. At a meeting of proprietors held February 3, 1661, the names of twenty-three persons are recorded, including William Harris, Thomas Olney, Thomas Angell and Roger Williams. At about the same time Daniel and Joseph Williams, sons of Roger, were granted a purchase right of land, probably about one hundred and twenty acres.

A recognition of the services of Dr. John Clarke, then in England, appears in a vote of the proprietors to make a gift to him of a purchase right of land.

After the extension of the territorial bounds of the town of Providence from the four-mile to the seven-mile line, it seemed wise to lay out a new town on the northwest border in the rich valley lands of the Woonasquatucket, south of Wyonkeag Hill, in the present town of Smithfield. Thomas Olney, Sr., William Carpenter and John Browne were a committee in 1662 "to vew Landes about Wayunkeake, to see where it will be convenient to place A Towne, And how the Towne shall be placed and in what manner." In 1663 Mary Walling asks liberty to sell her right of land at Wayunkeag. Also William Hawkins and John Steere are granted fifty acres of land apiece at Wyonkeag, provided they will build houses, cut hay, and live for three years on the land given them. Roger Williams was given the third choice of fifty acres at the new town. Thomas Olney, father and son, and Matthew Waller are other purchasers of fifty-acre lots. The town was not founded; it was laid out and that was the end of it.

It seems bootless to enter into the details of the forty years of debate and personal conflicts at Providence growing out of the property conditions and claims. The endless varieties of the whole trouble may be briefly summed up thus: In March, 1638, Mr. Williams became the sole owner of Providence Plantations, a gift of the Narragansett sachems. In October, 1638, he sold twelve-thirteenths of this large property to a syndicate of which he was one, owning and enjoying the privileges of a single shareholder. Differences soon arose between Mr. Williams and his associates in the corporation as to an extension of the territorial bounds. Harris, Olney, the Arnolds, Carpenter, Fenner, Field and others sought to carry the western boundary at first seven miles and afterwards twenty miles west of Fox Hill. Mr. Williams held to the four-mile limit at Neutakonkanut, and opposed further extensions. Had his policy been pursued, Providence in its narrow territorial domain would have lost existence in Massachusetts or Connecticut. Fortunately the extensionists prevailed and in 1660 the victory was won for the progressive party, which by skillful management on the part of its land-controlling leaders constituted a large part of the men of Providence, the whole population not exceeding two hundred. It is not a pleasant task to portray the singular idiosyncrasies and eccentricities of Roger Williams during the period from 1638 to 1660. Let it suffice to show the general attitude of both parties by a single reference with a brief interpretation.

On the 27th of October, 1660, Roger Williams wrote to the "Towne." The letter has been lost. The answer of the "Towne," drawn up by Thomas Olney, William Harris and Arthur Fenner may be found on pages 134, 135, volume ii, "Early Records of Providence." The letter in reply is dated the same day, October 27, 1660, and is as follows:

Sr:—Wee Received yor letter, and it being read in the ears of or Towne, they Considered this Answere.

That from these wordes in or Evidence taken by you, which are there; the Landes upon Moshassnick and Wanaskatuckett; which Landes comprehend Mussawasacutt etr; are ors already, and when wee plant there wee will Agree with the Indians Either to Remove or to ffence:

2ly. Whereas you say the Indians have subjected to the Bay. Wee say they were subject to the Nauhegganett Sachims when you bought the Land which wee now have, and yor selfe propose yett to buy; And wee Know, that if wee lett goe or True hold already Attained, wee shall (if not orselves, yett or posteritye) Smart for itt, and wee conceive herein that wee doe truely understand what yor Selfe doth not. And if yor Aprehension take place, as wee hope it never will, in those yor proposalls, wee happily may See what wee conceive You derive not, the Ruine of what you have given name to (viz) poore providence, As for the Natives Complaineing, wee have not wronged them, any further than Satissfaction, that wee Know of nor shall not, What there wronges to us are wee have hetherto rather Smoothered, then Complained, yett wee must tell you that

wee shall not be averse to any faire gratuetyss, Either to take them of of there fieldes, or otherwise alwayes haveing Respect unto the act of the Sachims whom you have formerly so much Honnored, And herein if you can Accomplish wee shall be ready to Asist with further pay, upon or former groundes, otherwise wee shal not medle, And forbid any so to doe, Thus in Love, Though in Briefe, Returned Wee rest yor Neighbours,

THE TOWNE OF PROVIDENCE.

By me Tho. Olney Junr., Clarke in the behalfe of the Towne.

The tenor of Mr. Williams' letter must be studied from the reply of the whole "Towne," *alias* the proprietary. A few months before, the "Towne" had voted to extend its limits on the west to the Connecticut line and on the north to the Massachusetts line. The new territory included lands in the northwestern parts, owned and occupied by the Nipmuc tribe. These were the Indians "subjected to the Bay," formerly subject to the Narragansetts. The proprietors had evidently learned that Mr. Williams' purpose was to secure a larger interest in his own right in Indian lands than he then possessed. His letter was a protest to the "Towne" against its action in extending the town limits twenty miles west from Fox Hill. He tries to discourage the proprietors by suggesting a possible war with Massachusetts, stating his "apprehensions" as to the future of the Providence settlement. The "Towne" tells him that it has already settled with the Indians justly, that they will pay more for the purchase, if necessary, and that in the judgment of the town meeting, the future of "poor providence" is bound up in their action, however much such a course runs counter to Mr. Williams' views. The plans of the "Towne" were carried out, the results fully vindicating the policy adopted. Mr. Williams continued in the minority party, often a small one, in the advocacy of a narrow and conservative policy till his death.

The charter of 1663, with its new interpretation of democracy as the protector of the social, civil and religious rights of the individual man as interpreted by Dr. John Clarke elevated new standards of citizenship, created a sovereign state and placed the colony of Rhode Island, after a struggle of a quarter of a century, at the head of the column of world democracies.





## CHAPTER XII

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GOVERNMENT BY ARBITRATION



## CHAPTER XII. GOVERNMENT BY ARBITRATION.

In the year 1640, we have the first attempt at an agreement of the settlers at Providence "in way of government." At that time several persons, members of the town corporation and others, after many considerations and consultations of our own State and also of States abroad in way of government, agreed on "government by way of arbitration."

Four persons—Robert Coles, Chad Brown, William Harris and John Warner—were chosen by the land corporation to act as arbitrators in the "many differances amongst us." The powers and duties of these persons are stated by them as follows: "We \* \* \* being freely chosen by the consent of our loving Friends and Neighbors the inhabitants of this Towne of providence; having many differences amongst us: They being Freely willing and also bound themselves to stand to our Arbetretion in all differences amongst us; to rest contented in our determination; being so betrusted, wee have seriously and carefully endeavored to waye and consider all those differences; being desirous to bring them to unitye and peace. Although our abilities are farr short in the due examination of such weightye thinges, yet so farr as wee cann conceive laieing all things together, we have gon the fairest and equallest way to produce peace."

These men were chosen as referees by the Town Fellowship to act in its behalf and on the behalf of all others not of the Corporation, who may not sign the articles of agreement. The only persons bound morally or legally to the decisions are the signers of the "Agreement." As there are no fines or punishments imposed and as there is no magistrate of any kind to enforce the decision, the act or judgment of the referees is wholly a matter of voluntary acceptance and fulfilment on the part of both parties in interest.

The first agreement of differences related to the boundary line separating the particular properties or lands in Pawtuxet "from the Genneral Comon of our Towne of Providence." This was "a straight line from a fresh spring, being in the gully, at the head of the Coave running in by the poynit of Land called Saxeefrax unto the Towne of Mashapauge to an Oake Tree standing nexte unto the Corne Field, being at this tyme the nearest Corne Field unto Pautuxett."

The second agreement gave the five disposers, the disposing of the common lands of Providence, also "the Towne Stock and all Gennerall things." No one was to be admitted a townsman except on a six days notice to the inhabitants, "to consider if any have just cause to show against receiveing of him." Each person accepted must subscribe to this

agreement. Any person wronged in the opinion of the disposers, may have a trial. A clerk was to be chosen to keep record "of all things belonging to the Towne and lieing in the Comon; we agree as formerly hath been the libertyes of the Towne, so still to hold forth Liberty of Conscience."

The third agreement recites that "Government by way of Arbitration" has been adopted "after many considerations and consultations of our owne State and also of States abroad in way of Government." The principle on which this new style of governing was founded was, "If men Refuse that which is but comon humanetye between man and man, then to compell such unreasonable persons to a reasonable way."

The method was this: The five disposers had power to compel a person to choose two men to arbitrate his case; if he should refuse to arbitrate, then these two men so chosen, should select two other men to act with them, two of the four to act for and represent each party; in case of a hearing and a decision, the party at fault to pay the arbitrators. If the four men could not agree and settle the dispute, then the five disposers were "to chuse three men to put an end to it, and for the Arbitrators to follow no imployment tell the cause be ended, without consent of the whole, that have to doe with the cause." Agreement fourth provided that the disposers might prosecute any offender, in case the matter was not taken up by the injured party.

The fifth agreement required all the inhabitants to assist in the pursuit and seizure of any offender; in case of a "Hubbub" without just cause, the party making shall be held responsible. The sixth agreement provided for calling a special meeting of the town to consider causes demanding immediate attention. The seventh required the disposers to see that every man had a deed of his land. The eighth required the disposers to meet once a month "upon Gennerall things and at the quarter day to yield to a new choyse and give up their old accountes." The last four agreements relate to minor details in administration.

These twelve articles of agreement were signed by thirty-seven persons as "those things which we have Gennerally Concluded on for or (our) peace, wee desiring or (our) Loving Friendes to receive as or (our) absolute determination,"

As this document of 1640 is the first declaration of the land proprietors of Providence, relating to civil government, and as it continued for nine years the working scheme of administration of public affairs until the issuance and acceptance of a town charter, from the General Assembly, under date of March 14, 1648-9, it is worth our while to give it careful study.

It is noteworthy that this is the first paper on record of any sort emanating from the settlers of Providence that has a fixed date as to its

draft. It was on July 27, 1640, four years after the Arnolds and Mr. Williams came to Providence and about two years after the formation of the Town Fellowship of Thirteen Proprietors. It probably originated with the committee of four men—Chad Browne, Robert Coles, William Harris and John Warner—chosen by the Proprietors. The first signer, Chad Browne, was probably the writer of the paper; the order of the signatures and the dates of signing are unknown. All that we have to rely upon as to this important instrument is a copy of the same on page 124, Vol. I, Suffolk Deeds, Boston, Massachusetts, and a second copy in the early records of the city of Providence, made March 28, 1662, by Thomas Olney, Jr., town clerk. When the plan went into operation is wholly a matter of conjecture. As its value and efficiency rested entirely on voluntary subscriptions, it is to be assumed that a fair number of the thirty-eight names were appended at an early day and that its workings began in the year of its inauguration. While the order of arrangement of names is not debatable, it is reasonable to suppose that the committee were the first signers, that Mr. Williams and his son Joseph signed later. We know that Jane Seare did not become a land owner until 1642, and that Gregory Dexter did not reach Providence before 1644. Mr. Chapin thinks that Matthew Waller, Edward Hart, Hugh Bewitt, Thomas Hopkins, John Lippitt, Joan Tiler, Christopher Unthank, Williams Hawkins were among the later signers. The names of others of the original fifty-two Proprietors, who did not sign were Thomas Paintor, John Greene, Sr. and Jun., Thomas James, Widow Reeve, Joshua Verin, Alice Daniels, John Sweet, Francis Weston, Ezekiel Holliman, Daniel Abbott, George Rickard, Thomas Hopkins, Matthew Weston and John Lippitt.

We are now face to face with the problem of determining the nature and status of the Providence plan in directing civil affairs. Let us meet it fairly and decide it intelligently and justly. It has been affirmed for a long period of years that Roger Williams was the founder of the first State in the world with full liberty in civil and religious concerns. Was the polity at Providence that of a true democracy? Did it proclaim religious liberty? Was Roger Williams the founder of the civil order that held sway in Providence for nine years, from 1640 to 1649?

Government is the system of polity, a body of principles and rules by which the affairs of a community are administered. A democratic government is one that springs from all the people, is instituted for the well being of all the people and is governed by rules, laws and administrators or rulers, chosen by a majority of all the people. Real democracy rests on individual right and rights, on the supremacy of law as the protector of such rights and on courts of justice and officers who shall compel obedience to the law, civil or criminal. Laws, without penalties and

magistrates to execute them, are worse than worthless—they invite lawlessness and anarchy.

There is another fundamental principle of democracy, not to be overlooked. It is that for self-protection and durability, the right of the people to rule involves the right to claim the service of all in the protection of a community from enemies, within and without. An allied principle is that which not only claims protection of person and property, but which calls upon each member to surrender a portion of his possessions for the benefit of all. This we call equitable taxation service, one of the bulwarks of a democratic state. Can Providence of 1640 stand under these tests?

Providence, from October, 1638, to March, 1649, was a Proprietary. The ownership of all the lands of the Plantations was, from March, 1638, to October, 1638, in Roger Williams. At the latter date he made twelve others joint and equal owners with himself of the same territory. These Proprietors controlled the sale of all lands and the admission of all inhabitants to what they called the "Town Fellowship." The powers, rights and duties of the Proprietary were as clear and well defined in the Seventeenth Century as are those of any corporate body in the Twentieth Century. For reference to the corporation known as a Proprietary reference is made to a digest of laws relating to the New England Proprietaries, prepared by Hon. Samuel Ames, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island. In the case of the Providence Proprietary it was self-incorporated; a voluntary compact existed; the proprietors assembled, passed votes and orders as to their common property, admitted members and adopted such rules as seemed necessary for their own affairs and the relations to the townspeople without the Proprietary.

This body existed for two centuries and its history is outlined in *The Annals of Providence*, written by Hon. William R. Staples, the last Proprietor's clerk. The Providence Proprietary or "Town Fellowship" or "Town" as it was afterwards called, was a land-rich, purse-poor monopoly, that controlled the affairs of the community, with or without its consent. Its origin was not from the people, but from one man—Roger Williams. It was not a civic body, but a private, independent land corporation. It was supreme in authority, recognizing no superior in the Plantations. Its powers and privileges were not created and established by the inhabitants of Providence nor was the Corporation under inspection of the people, nor was it responsible to the people. The Proprietary could make laws only for its own body. It could not rightfully impose any laws or obligations upon the people. It possessed no civic functions and could therefore exercise no control of any sort over civil or ecclesiastical affairs. Any declarations it might make, of whatever nature, ap-

plied solely to its own membership, and in no manner related themselves to the opinions or acts of others.

From 1636 to 1650 there was no government "of, by and for the people" in Providence. There were no laws, no courts, no magistrates, no constable or justice, no warranty deed and no legal papers executed, no tax, no public improvements, no means of defence provided. Mr. Williams wrote to Gov. Winthrop: "We have no Patent, nor doth the face of magistracy suit with our present conditions."

The "Agreements," to which we have given attention, originated in the Providence Proprietary. All the signers were members of the Proprietary. No person dwelling at Providence in 1640, outside the Proprietary, signed the Agreement. It was a land-holder's agreement, voluntarily made, and applicable only to those who signed it. There was a large number of landless people, not proprietors, who had been admitted to "freedom of inhabitation," who had built log-houses on the Plantations or camped in the forests who were "discontented with their estate" and sought "the freedom of vote also and equality;" who were denied both, either for want of money to purchase a seat in the Proprietary, or like Samuel Gorton, who, having money, failed to satisfy the Proprietary that they were desirables. Whether the government by arbitration related itself to this body of people, we have no hint. They were probably a law unto themselves and exercised themselves in the fullest freedom as thorns in the sides of the Proprietors. Certainly, men of the ability of Mr. Gorton, financially and mental, could openly and boldly declare, "that the whole Providence landed oligarchy, with its ridiculous system of government by arbitration, was nothing more nor less than a high-handed encroachment upon the public domain, and a usurpation upon the common law, both of which abuses he, as a public functionary in ordinary, was called upon to redress." (Richman).

As proof of the weakness of the arbitration government, the first important decision under it, that relating to a judgment for £15 against Francis Weston, resulted in civil war and bloodshed at Pawtuxet, in which some of the disposers had a part. Judge Staples says, "The new system (arbitration), by its weakness and lack of energy, gave rise to difficulties, which, to some of the inhabitants seemed inherent and insurmountable. The great liberty which all enjoyed was abused by some to licentiousness. From the denial of the right of government to interfere in matters of conscience, some claimed the right to do with impunity whatsoever they said conscience dictated. Others were accused of denying all power in magistrates." What Providence needed in 1636-40 was law, magistracy, government,—without these, all loud sounding terms of "liberty of conscience," "distressed in conscience," "liberty," "democracie," were empty words, having no significance in actual government, and only

exercised in the direction of uncontrolled license, the absence of law is the paradise of the law-breaker.

A complete collapse of "Government by Arbitration" at Providence occurred on the 15th of November, 1641, when directly following the Gorton-Weston "Hubbub" at Papaquinapaug, thirteen of the original signers of the "Agreement" signed a letter addressed to the Governor and Assistants of the Massachusetts Bay Colony "to lend us a neighbour-like helping hand" in present troubles and others threatening. This was a confession that the Providence government was wholly inadequate for the protection of persons and property, to say nothing of its absolute failure to establish a democracy consonant with "freedom in religious concerns." All the professions of civil and religious liberty at Providence, under the Williams scheme are hollow pretense, of the quality of "sound-  
ing brass and tinkling cymbals." The names of the men who made the distressing appeal to the Bay Colony (Chapin's Documentary History of Rhode Island, pp. 134-137) are: William Field, William Harris, William Carpenter, William Wickenden, William Reynolds, Thomas Harris, Thomas Hopkins, Hugh Bewitt, Joshua Winsor, Benedict Arnold, William Man, William Hunkinger and Robert West. Gov. Winthrop replied: "We answered them that we could not levy any war, etc. without a General Court. For counsel we told them that except they did submit themselves to some jurisdiction, either Plimouth or ours, we had no calling or warrant to interpose in their contentions, but if they were once subject to any, then they had a calling to protect them." Beneath the diplomatic cloak of a shrewd reply appears the figure of the Bay in the attitude of a willing recipient of the Providence Plantations.

It would appear that Gorton and some of his associates, after the "Hubbub" removed to the south side of the Pawtuxet, occupying and purchasing lands which Robert Cole bought of Mr. Williams, January, 1639. In December, 1641, Benedict Arnold bought of Miantonomi, a large tract of land on the south side of the Pawtuxet. In addition to this purchase, William Arnold, William Carpenter and Robert Cole obtained of Socononoco, Sachem at Pawtuxet, in 1643, all the lands on the north bank of the Pawtuxet, included in a previous sale to Roger Williams, which had been resold to the Pawtuxet purchasers by Mr. Williams. From our standpoint of judgment, this act has no reasonable interpretation or justification, unless on the grounds that most of the owners of the north purchase had assented to and withdrawn from an agreement to transfer their allegiance to the Bay. The next step of the Arnold, Carpenter-Cole Company was submission of their persons and properties to the Bay Colony, which was done on September 8, 1642. The ubiquitous Cole, expelled from the Bay, a disciple of Mr. Williams, later a friend of

Gorton, is now found pledging his fealty to the Bay after an expiration of three years. The Records of the General Court bear these items:

Willi. Arnold, Rob. Coale, Willi. Carpenter & Bened. Arnold, his Company upon their petition were taken under or government & protection.

Willi. Arnold, Robert Coale, Benedict Arnold & Willi. Arnold is to see to keep the peace in their lands.

Winthrop's journal contains the following account of the secession and acquisition:

At this Court also, four of Providence, who could not consort with Gorton and that company, and therefore were continually injured and molested by them, came and offered themselves and their lands, etc., to us, and were accepted under our government and protection. This we did partly to rescue these men from unjust violence, and partly to draw in the rest in those parts, either under ourselves or Plimouth, who now lived under no government, but grew very offensive, and the place was likely to be of use to us, especially if we should have occasion of sending out against any Indians of Narragansett and likewise for an outlet into the Narragansett Bay, and seeing it came without our seeking, and would be no charge to us, we thought it not wisdom to let it slip.

Prior to the establishment of the "Government by Arbitration." at Providence, 1640, seven English Colonies had been established on the Northern Atlantic Coast: Virginia in 1607, Plymouth in 1620, Massachusetts Bay 1628-1630, Maryland 1632, Aquidneck 1638, Hartford 1638, and New Haven 1639. All of these Colonies were organized under charters, organic laws, declarations or compacts. In these several acts creating governments for the people within the several jurisdictions named were certain declarations of the principles of government which was to be administered, the rights and duties of citizenship were defined, laws, orders and ordinances were to be made by a majority vote of the people, officers were to be elected to administer the laws. Representative Assemblies were ordained, courts of justice were provided for in all the Colonies, with "full and absolute power and authority to correct, punish, pardon, govern and rule" all the people falling within the several provinces named, to the great and noble end, that all may "live together in the Feare and true Worship of Almighty God, Christian Peace and Civil Quietness, each with other, whereby everyone may with more Safety, Pleasure and Profit enjoye that whereunto they shall attaine with great Pain and Perill."

Aquidneck, receiving its grant on March 24, 1638, the same day that Mr. Williams obtained the gift of Providence Plantations, and prior to the date of "Arbitration" agreements at Providence, had established "a

Bodie Politick," founded two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, established a civil polity, elected town officers, created courts of justice, elected magistrates, surveyed and deeded lands, laid out highways, voted and assessed taxes on all the property of all the people and to conclude, had formed the Colony of Rhode Island, with a Governor, a General Assembly, a Colonial Seal, a Colonial clerk and treasurer and a court for the Colony.

A careful study of the workings of the other Colonial organisms, outside of Providence, shows the early establishment of regular representative assemblies or legislatures, as law-making bodies, governors and ordinary Colonial officers elected by the people, magistrates to see to the administration of the laws, and courts of justice to support the law-making power. In each the main features of a democratic polity found expression in larger or smaller measure. The early charters and constitutions incorporated the features of the democratic state and all were welded into a well ordered unity in the experiences of a century of Colonial life following settlement.

We have already shown that Providence was nothing more nor less than an English Proprietary from 1638 to 1649—a land corporation—not a democracy. The town had no declaration of democratic principles, no laws, no town officers of a civil polity, no magistrates. Judge Staples says Providence did not elect any town officers until 1651, two years after it was incorporated as a town by the General Assembly. No taxes were assessed, no public improvements begun. Williams and Winthrop designate the town as "Poor Providence," on account of its troubled state of affairs. Individualism is rampant; civil order is couchant. Dr. Richman, in "*Rhode Island: Its Making and Its Meaning*," writes: "Now that the island of Aquidneck had become a political entity, the contrast between it and the entity (or non-entity) Providence is marked in the extreme. By Providence there was symbolized individualism—both religious and political—a force centrifugal, disjunctive and even disruptive. By Aquidneck (and especially by the Newport part of it) there was symbolized collectivism—a collectivism thoroughly individualized as to religion, but in politics conjunctive and centripetal. \* \* \* During the age of Roger Williams that which we are bidden to contemplate on the shores of Narragansett Bay is a struggle for supremacy between separationism and collectivism." Prof. Masson calls Mr. Williams "The arch-individualist." Mr. W. B. Weeden speaks of "The vagaries of his individual will." John Quincy Adams characterized him as "Conscientiously contentious."

It is easy to understand why Mr. Williams could not found a democracy in Rhode Island; he was not a man of the democratic spirit and temper. Extreme individualism is the opposite of democracy. As like

cultivates like, Mr. Williams' spirit and policy indoctrinated those about him, and made them separatist. He encouraged and taught separatism, which is anti-democratic. There seems to have been but one common impulse at Providence—that was the acquisition of lands. Nearly all of the records for the first fifty years relate to the lay-out, bounds and transfer of landed estates. The first town record of civil affairs appears under date of April 27, 1649. "Ordered that or (our) Constable shall have a staffe made him whereby he shall be known to have the authority of the Towne-Constable."

Another supreme factor of Mr. Williams' individualism was the assumption of autocracy—the supremacy of the individual in matters of common concern, the setting up of the personal will and conscience as superior to the community will and conscience. This was the cause of Mr. Williams' troublesome experiences of Massachusetts. The Bay people and the Plymouth people did not interfere with Mr. Williams' personal or religious liberty. They did justly object to his arrogant attempt to compel church and state to submit to the vagaries of his mind, conscience and will. Such a temper of mind cannot endure the restraints of law and ordinances nor has it any patience to submit to magistracy. Mr. Williams tells us once and again that Providence cannot submit to "magistracy," which means that they would not submit to law, for the magistrate is the expression and representation of law and social order, and both are foundations of democracy. "No law and no magistrate" spell anarchy, not democracy. The French Revolution overthrew law and magistrates and the streets of Paris ran with blood. The individualism of Mr. Williams and his followers at Providence opposed "the face of magistracy," the protector of all law and democracy. Chief Justice Thomas Durfee, of Rhode Island, states that "Historians urge that he (Roger Williams) was eccentric, pugnacious, persistent, troublesome; undoubtedly he was."

The finest test of a democratic community is the open door, the hospitable spirit. Mr. Williams wrote to Gov. Winthrop that he intended to act as door-keeper at Providence, admitting only such as he judged fit. This plan was changed to that of control of admission by land owners and freemen by the majority vote of the Proprietors. This was not democracy—it was aristocracy—a far different principle in civil affairs. A community that feared, and was organized to prevent, the advent of a great body of people from the Bay Colony, could not be a Democracy. The denial of admission and lands to Samuel Gorton and Randall Holden was not Democracy—it was Absolutism in government. Mr. Arnold says of Gorton: "He was one of the most remarkable men that ever lived." Yet he was denied a share in the government of Providence.

"Government by Arbitration," is the full and final confession that the Providence experiment was not democratic. It would call for the practise of a lively sophistry to establish a momentary assent to the belief that a land corporation, established for business ends, was a civil commonwealth and that the operations of the "Agreement" fulfilled the functions of "a free church in a free state." Such a visionary view of the Providence attempt to set up an absurd and impractical form of administering civil affairs, in the absence of the most elementary principles, conditions, and safeguards of Democracy, can scarcely exist. Yet, Mr. Williams, the man credited as the father and founder of American Democracy, by Mr. Strauss, in a letter to the townsmen of Providence, dated June 15, 1681, prays the town "that our ancient use of arbitration be brought in esteem again." In his last days, he clings to the government vagaries of his youth which were styled by Mr. Henry C. Dorr as "attempts in Providence to live without law and govern without government."

Concerning this form of organization, Mr. Irving R. Richman in "Rhode Island: Its Making and Its Meaning," 1908, wrote as follows:

With the year 1640, politics at Providence took on a new phase. The unorganic in government was compelled to give place to the organic—a low form of the organic, it is true, but organic to a certain extent none the less. \* \* \* How little was gained in organic effectiveness by the substitution of the plan of government by arbitration for that of government by majority of householders becomes apparent in the fact that the only executive power provided under the plan first mentioned was that of "the whole inhabitants," brought into activity by the "hub bub" or hue and cry: There was still no constable. Thus the Providence body politic—a low and imperfect organism, its vital currents baulked in their courses, maintained a weak and miserable existence for several years.



## CHAPTER XIII

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ROGER WILLIAMS AND THE NARRAGANSETTS



## CHAPTER XIII.

### ROGER WILLIAMS AND THE NARRAGANSETTS.

As early as July, 1636, we may safely assume that Roger Williams, William Arnold, William Harris, John Smith and William Carpenter had built squatter huts on the lands between Moshassuck Hill and the Pawtuxet river, without anything but squatter rights to the land on which they were built. It was uncertain whose lands they were on, for both tribes, the Wampanoags and the Narragansetts, laid claim to the lands on the west bank of the Pawtucket, and Mr. Williams had probably been told by Massasoit that he owned lands in that section, proof of which was established later by the payment of considerable sums to the sachem to extinguish his title. Up to this time, it is safe to assume that Mr. Williams' acquaintance had been limited to the sachems and principal men and women of the Wampanoags. The reasons for this belief are that for about three years Mr. Williams lived at Plymouth, whose people were in constant contact and communication with their allies, the Wampanoags, while at the same time they were not in friendly relations with the Narragansetts, between whom and Massasoit's people hatreds were cherished and hostilities carried on, Captain Myles Standish and the Boston military being engaged in the war between the two tribes, including the Pequots, also hostile to the tribe of Plymouth Colony. We know that Mr. Williams was in very friendly and business relations with Massasoit, a fact that would preclude and forbid equally cordial intercourse with Canonicus and the Narragansetts. Mr. Williams was a man of an impulsive nature and quick and independent in the initiative. He was not long in doubt as to the tribal ownership of the lands at Moshassuck, and in accordance with the usual custom of the white colonists, he sought and easily found Canonicus, if indeed the old chieftain had not first found him. The term of non-acquaintance must have been brief, for Mr. Williams had set out on a campaign "to do the natives good." Of necessity he must live near or among the natives he was to serve, he must have a house for his family, then of four persons and a fifth to arrive in the October days, and he must have land he could call his own to cultivate. The first meeting of Roger Williams, exile, missionary, with the two great sachems of the Narragansetts, Canonicus and Miantonomi, is a subject worth while for a Rhode Island artist. The details of the scene at Moshassuck or Narragansett imagination must furnish. That it was cordial on the part of both parties admits of no doubt. Mr. Williams' generous nature must have found expression in gifts that satisfied the eye and mind of the royal chieftains. Writing from Narragansett, under date of June 18, 1682, Mr. Williams says:

I testify as in the presence of the all-making and all-seeing God that about fifty years since (1636) I coming into this Narragansett country found a great contest between three sachems, two (to wit, Canonicus and Miantonomo) were against Ousamequin (Massasoit) on Plymouth side. I was forced to travel between them three to pacify to all their and their dependents' spirits of my honest intentions to live peaceably by them. \* \* \* I declare \* \* \* that were it not for the favor God gave me with Canonicus, none of these parts, no, not Rhode Island (Aquadneck), had been purchased or obtained, for I never got anything out of Canonicus but by gift. \* \* \* When the hearts of my countrymen and friends and brethren failed me, this infinite wisdom and merits stirred up the barbarous heart of Canonicus to love me as his son to his last gasp, by which means I had not only Miantonomo and all the lowest sachems my friends, but Ousamequin also, who because of my great friendship with him while at Plymouth, and the authority of Canonicus, consented freely, being also well gratified by me (by gifts) to the Governor Winthrop and my enjoyment of Prudence, yea of Providence itself, and all the other lands I procured of Canonicus which were upon the Point (at Narragansett), and in effect whatsoever I desired of him; and I never denied him (Canonicus) or Miantonomo whatever they desired of me as to goods or gifts or use of my boats or pinnace and the travails of my own person, day and night.

In Mr. Williams' frequent letters to Governor Winthrop, he tells him that one or the other Narragansett sachem wants "ten pounds of sugar," "six fathom of beads," "a coat," "powder," "some yellow or red for their heads," "a coat and also some powder," "tobacco," or some other goods the whites had to bestow. As to subjects of converse, the matter of lands must have been among the first, and the gifts of a home ("sale," Mr. Williams says he called it) must have been among the topics of first concern. Here we find Mr. Williams at the junction of two divergent paths in the lifework before him. Which will he choose? Shall he shape his course as an Indian missionary or as the founder of a new civil community? If the former, then he should locate at Narragansett with the people he is to call his mission flock. But he finds himself in the neighborhood of four or more families, with the prospect of more to follow. He hesitates and waits the answer of the voice in his soul he calls God. But that voice leads him to give his new home a name, "NEW PROVIDENCE," a misson station of the Narragansett country, or a new town for freemen, white people, Englishmen of his own choosing. Time and circumstance solve many problems, and the Williams problem waits on these conditions. Meanwhile, he hears from Salem that some of his old parishioners are looking about for a new home and he sends letters of "what cheer" and encouragement for them to join the New Providence band. Employment he has plenty in providing for his family, in acquainting himself with the country, in establishing friendly and treaty relations with the Narragansetts and in studying their customs and languages, as he had previously done with the Wam-

panoags. Nothing could so easily assure Canonicus of Mr. Williams' generous heart and unselfish spirit as his hearty interest in the social and civil life of the great tribe and the mysteries of their language—the gift of the "Great Spirit." He who could interpret the secrets of human intercourse among savages and who, in his confidential relations with their wise men in council, could reveal to the children of the forest "Gitehe Manito the Mighty, He the Master of Life," greater even than Cowtantowit, dweller in Sowanee, the region of balmy airs, the eternal home of the virtuous dead—he, indeed, must be in his own person a son of the supreme. And thus the reverent red men came to value the new squatter on the Moshassuck and to him they would give land to his liking and an homage not accorded to their heroes, sages or sachems.

Undoubtedly, the promise of lands of considerable extent and value was made to Mr. Williams by Canonicus soon after the planting at Moshassuck. The deed of these lands was not signed by the Narragansett sachems until March 24, 1638, nearly two years later. During that period a number of English people from Boston and Salem and the Cape towns have joined the squatter community at New Providence, as Mr. Williams had named his new settlement, all from Mr. Williams to the latest comer camping on land to which they had no title. How long this was to continue depended on the joint action of Roger Williams in behalf of the settlers and the owners, the Indian sachems. There was another title owner at this very time to whom Mr. Williams had given little consideration, and that was the English Crown. Virginia, Maryland, Plymouth and Massachusetts planters had taken the preliminary steps in obtaining the royal consent to lands in North Virginia before they left England. Mr. Williams was so little versed in colonial patents that he left foreign ownership out of his accounting, failing to realize that John Smith or Samuel Jones, settling on Weybosset Neck, with the King's patent in hand, could have subverted all his cherished plans and ambitions. English common law would have voided the sachems' deeds and scattered to the four winds all "squatter sovereign" rights or claims. But Smith and Jones did not put in an appearance and the title, weak as it was, inhered in Mr. Williams. The families that sat down on the Indian lands at New Providence waited on Mr. Williams for a title to their lands. The promise of territory was to him alone. William Arnold and William Harris and John Smith, *et al.*, wanted land and often urged and argued for individual ownership. The legal mind of Harris was alive to the issue and his positive nature and superior knowledge, as well as age, made him a thorn in Mr. Williams' sensitive sides. What Harris wanted was lands, with a clear title, where he could establish a permanent home, and what Harris wanted all the rest wanted, but none could get. The people began to talk loud, to claimor, and even to threaten disturbance. Questions were raised

whether Mr. Williams intended to build a town or even to buy the land promised him. He was called hard names by those he had led to Moshassuck. By some means he was able to prevent an open rebellion, while confidence was sorely strained by hopes delayed and promises unfulfilled. Mr. Williams was a man who admitted few into intimate fellowship. Whatever his plans were he was his own counsellor and kept his councils from Arnold, Harris, Smith and the rest. To Governor John Winthrop, of Boston, he committed his proposed plans and from him sought advice. The great body of the early letters of Mr. Williams is directed to "The right worshipful, beloved and much honored friend, Mr. Governor (Winthrop) of the Massachusetts, etc." He signs himself, "Your worship's most unworthy, unfeigned and faithful, Roger Williams."

What was the immediate cause of Mr. Williams' act in obtaining the memorandum of lands of Canonicus in 1638? Prior to this we may rest assured that personal indecision was the reason for a delay that was interpreted by many as a surrender of the proposed gift. Events transpiring in Boston in 1637 are destined to bring to a practical decision the question as to the permanency of the New Providence settlement. On November 2, 1637, Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, leader of the Antinomian Independents of Boston, was banished from the Bay Colony. Within four months from that date about sixty families were either exiled or ordered under the bands of the colony, pointing to expatriation, and the nucleus of a new migration drew up the Boston-Portsmouth compact for a new settlement wherever God's leading should be recognized. In the early months of 1637-38, probably in February, Mr. Williams is surprised by a visit from three most unexpected guests from Boston—William Coddington, Dr. John Clarke and a third, name unknown—who came to Providence to advise with Mr. Williams "about our design." Mr. Williams presented two places in the neighborhood, Sowams (Barrington) and Aquidneck. A visit to Myles Standish at Plymouth by Mr. Williams and the Clarke party compels them to give up all hope of the former place and opens expectations as to the island, Aquidneck, owned and occupied by the Narragansetts. To the purchase of that beautiful island at the mouth of Narragansett Bay, Mr. Williams pledges his aid and faithfully fulfills his mission as agent of the Boston Colony. Mr. Williams is no longer in doubt as to the acceptance of some form of title to the lands offered him by Canonicus, two years before. He had watched the Hutchinson movement from the outset and in its final stages at Boston he may have hoped for reënforcement of his own company at New Providence from the substantial citizenship of the bay, but he had probably never dreamed that a full-fledged, well-constituted, well-disciplined body of three hundred of the best people of Boston would ever become permanent dwellers in his own neighborhood, at his own doors. The fates had so ordained and in

the decision was involved the future of New Providence. It may be safely affirmed that the decision of Mr. Williams as to a permanent settlement at Moshassuck was coincident with the decision of the Boston migrants to found a colony on Aquidneck. Mr. Williams is to be the founder of a town, not a missionary to the Narragansetts. In reality he becomes both.

One paper "sold unto Roger Williams" lands at Moshassuck, lying between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet rivers. The other "sold Mr. Coddington and his friends" "the great Island of Acquednecke," etc. Both papers state the consideration of the sale. Both convey only a life interest. The memorandum of the sale to Mr. Coddington will be found in the chapter of the settlement at Aquidneck. The Williams Memorandum follows:

AT NANHIGGANSICK, THE 24TH OF THE FIRST MONTH COMMONLY  
CALLED MARCH, IN YE SECOND YEARE OF OUR PLANTATION OR PLANTING  
AT MOOSHANSICK OR PROVIDENCE.

MEMORANDUM: That we Canaunicus and Miantunomi, the two chief sachems of Nanhiggansick, having two yeares since sold unto Roger Williams ye lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers called Mooshansick and Wanasquatucket, doe now by these presents establish and confirme ye bounds of these lands, from ye river and fields at Pautuckqut, ye great hill of Notquonckanet, on ye northwest, and the town of Manshapogue on ye west.

As also in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he hath continually done for us, both with our friends at Massachusetts, as also at Quinichicutt and Apaum or Plymouth, we do freely give unto him all that land from those rivers reaching to Pawtuxet river, as also the grass and meadows upon ye said Pawtuxet river.

In witnes whereof wee have hereunto set our hands,

Ye mark of (—) Cannounicus.  
Ye mark of (—) Miantunnomi.

In ye presence of

The mark of (—) Sotaash.  
The mark of (—) Assotemeweit.

This memorandum paper, not a deed, appears as printed above in "The Rhode Island Colonial Records," volume i, page 18, and seems to be a copy of the original, although the usual reprint of what is called the original is so dilapidated as to be unintelligible. In 1658, on the 7th of the 12th month, William Arnold, of Pawtuxet, came into the town court and acknowledged that what "is wanting in the now writeing called the *Town Evidence* which agreeth not with these two coppies (Harris and Olney) was torn by accident in his house at Pautuxett." Then follows the paper as printed above with the following later addition to the original paper, written in another hand:

1630, MEMORANDUM, 3 month, 9 day. This was all againe confirmed by Miantenomu he acknowledged this his act and hand up the stremes of Pautuckett and Pautuxett without limmets wee might have for our use of cattell.

Witness hereof,

ROGER WILLIAMS,  
BENEDICT ARNOLD.

This memorandum, a postscript to the first, taken with the first, dated March 24, 1638, are the accepted town evidence of the land conveyances from the Narragansett sachems to Roger Williams. It will be noticed that Miantonomi did not sign the second memorandum.

Admitting these memoranda as evidence as to the lands conveyed or intended to be conveyed to Mr. Williams as grantee by the sachems, we call attention to some important features of these papers. The first point of note is that the sale was made two years before the transfer; the second is that the sale was in reality a gift; a third does not transfer to the grantee the rights of Indian heirs or assigns; a fourth is that the memoranda convey to Mr. Williams only a life interest in the estate, with no right to sell or assign to others; a fifth is the indefiniteness of the bounds; a sixth is found in the second memorandum in conferring only a chattel right of use and not of possession. Any one of these factors would invalidate a good title and could not pass the tests of a good conveyancer of early or later New England. Whatever the incredulous assumption some fatuous eulogist of Mr. Williams' legal knowledge, obtained in the law office of Chief Justice Coke, it all disappears in the reading of a paper that had no legal value whatever in the presence of a royal patent. Its value rested entirely in good faith in the intent of the contracting parties. All debate as to forgery of deeds is as fruitless as the battle with windmills. The Indians relied on Mr. Williams as to a legal transfer by paper, while to them "a twig and turf" transfer would have been more intelligible and quite as binding.

The territory included in the sachems' gift extended from Tockwotton Point at Moshassuck, up the west bank of the Pawtucket river to a point about a mile above the falls, thence the line ran west—northwest—to Absolute Swamp, on the line of the Break-Neck road, on the north side of Lincoln Park; thence the line turned in a southwesterly direction to Neutakoukanut Hill; thence by the Pocasset river to the Pawtuxet and, following that stream, to the river, now called Providence, and thence by the west bank of the stream to Fox and Tockwotton hills. This territory was about six miles long and three and a half miles wide, an area of less than twenty-four square miles. William Harris was among the first to appreciate the narrow bounds of the lands for a plantation and in his usual clear and emphatic manner so stated it.

Singularly enough, Mr. Williams was in full agreement with Mr. Harris at this time, although a five-acre house lot would have satisfied his ambitions two years before, when the missionary zeal was big within him. While Canonicus would have given more had Mr. Williams asked it, he seems to have been prevented by the local sachems, who were unwilling to surrender their lands. Mr. Williams explains the situation thus:

The sachems and I were hurried (confined) to those short bounds by reason of ye Indians then at Mashapog, Notakunkanet & Pawtucket, beyond whom the sachems could not then go.

In another letter to John Whipple, he wrote:

The bounds (were) set under the hands of Canonicus and Miantonomo, and were set so short (as to Mashapaug and Pawtucket, and at that time) because they would not intrench upon the Indians inhabiting round about us, for the prevention of strife between us.

At the same time Mr. Williams expresses satisfaction personal as to the size of the gift, saying in the same letter in 1669:

First, the grant of as large accommodations as any English in New England had. This the sachems always promised me, and they had cause, for I was a right hand unto them, to my great cost and travail. Hence I was sure of the Tocekennqinit (Toskeunke) meadows, and what could with any show of reason have been desired.

These quotations evidence the fact that there were Indian villages at Mashapaug (Auburn), at Neutakonkanut Hill and above Pawtucket Fields, which determined the bounds of the lands conveyed in 1638.

During the two years since the first comers had set foot on the soil at Moshassuck, additions of men, women and children have been made to the new settlement. We know the names of a few who had cast in their lot at New Providence or Pawtuxet. These are Stukeley Westcott, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman and Ezekiel Holiman or Holman. All of these came from Salem, had families and left the Bay Colony for Providence either under censure of the church or by order of the General Court of the colony. Joshua Verin and wife, of Salem, were of the settlers, as was William Field, prior to 1630.

Any attempt to name the heads of families at Providence, the number of persons in those families and the names and number of persons without families is absolutely without value. The records are meagre, some are ineligible and the early writings called town records are without dates. The first date of the proprietors on town records is July 27, 1642, the only date of that year; there are two dates in 1643, one in 1645, one in

1648, and four in 1649, the year of the incorporation. The historian's task is a difficult one, in the attempt to give a true outline of events and to correct the errors of earlier writers. A single instance of gross error appears in Henry C. Dorr's paper on "Providence Proprietors and Freeholders" (Col. of R. I. H. S., volume ix, 1897, page 11). In a footnote, he says: "In the autumn of 1638, thirteen persons formed the Baptist Society. In 1637 there were fifty-four *householders* in Providence purchase. The exact number of the population is not known." Mr. Dorr should have known that Mr. Williams' deed was dated March 24, 1638, and that the rebaptism of the twelve occurred later. That there were fifty-four families in Providence is far beyond fact or belief and the statement tends to discredit evidential matters. In 1655, eighteen years later, Providence had only forty-two freemen.

The "Memorandum" of the sachems to Roger Williams fixes the first landmark of Providence history, March 24, 1637-38. The "Memorandum" of the sachems to Mr. Coddington signed the same day and at the same place fixes the first landmark as to Aquidneck history. The memoranda are cotemporaneous and both settlements, Providence and Portsmouth, trace their properties to the original aboriginal ownership in March, 1638. All that occurred at Providence or on Aquidneck, prior to this self-determining date and the transactions thereof partakes of an individualistic character without political or special social value. Mr. Williams was master of the situation at Providence, and all lived on promises that waited on Mr. Williams' acts for fulfillment. He was the great "Squatter Sovereign"—the lord of a manor in expectancy. Not even a written compact held the people at Providence and Pawtuxet together. A sense of the need of mutual support in defense against their Indian neighbors, especially the Pequot tribe, was the strongest bond of union between them. Providence history, hitherto a theory, now begins to be, with its chief citizen, in absolute control of about 14,000 acres of land.

What will he do with it? On all sides there is a demand for land. Those who came in advance of Mr. Williams, as well as his companions, demand a share in the estate. The demand is imperative and Mr. Williams yields to the demand. Richman thinks it was the purpose of the grantee to use the gift for charities. As no persons were in greater need than Mr. Williams and his associates in exile, it would seem that properly charity should begin at home, unless, as he suggests, New Providence could have been made a mission station or a communal or socialistic society, made up of people coming hither on account of "distressed consciences." "Distress for conscience" was coming to be a contagious disease at Salem, whence most of the early immigrants came. The health officers of the General Court of the bay enumerated various symptoms of "distress" as occasions for the "orders for departure from the colony,"

among which were drunkenness, and various like disorders in the civil body. The diagnosis of some cases revealed a new epidemic styled Williamsitis, located at Salem, in the Rev. Hugh Peter's Puritan church. Relief seems to have been found in total immersion in the salt waters of Moshassuck Cove.

Roger Williams was not a covetous man. On the other hand, benevolence was his besetting and "upsetting" sin. His son Daniel said of his father, "If a covetous man had that opportunity as he had, most of this town would have been his tenants." A great estate, forest laden, has unexpectedly come into his possession. Englishmen, in their English homes, knew only two classes of estates, individual and rental—the landlord and the tenant. They came to New England with English ideas and ideals. William Harris was a man of the English landlord type, the antipode of Roger Williams.

Mr. Williams, with his generous idealism, almost amounting to criminal license, with an inherent faith that all men and women were really good, unless proved to be criminally bad, did not know how best to administer his estate and wrote to his "honored friend," "the most worshipful" Governor of the bay for advice as to citizenship and propertyship in the new mission town at Moshassuck. We know what he wrote to Governor Winthrop, but we have no record of the Governor's reply, if he did reply. In his letter he proposed "a double subscription" for "a word of private advise," the first concerning "masters of families," the second concerning "those few young men, and any who shall hereafter (by your favourable connivance) desire to plant with us." This letter is an essential bit of evidence in the story of the founding of Providence, to which most of it pertains. It may be found entire in volume vi, Pub. of THE NARRAGANSETT CLUB (first series), MDCCCLXXIV, John R. Bartlett, editor, pages 3, 4, 5, 6. We quote the body of the letter, which is without date, but, as the contents indicate, was subsequent to the memorandum of March 24, 1638:

The condition of myself and those few families here planting with me, you know full well; we have no patent; nor doth the face of magistracy suit with our present conditions. Hitherto, the masters of families have ordinarily met once a fortnight and consulted about our common peace, watch, and planting; and mutual consent have finished all matters with speed and peace.

Now of late some young men, single persons (of whom we had much need) being admitted to freedom of inhabitation, and promising to be subject to the orders made by the consent of the householders, are discontented with their estate, and seek the freedom of vote also, and equality, etc.

Beside, our dangers (in the midst of these dens of lions) now especially, call upon us to be compact in a civil way and power.

I have therefore had thoughts of propounding to my neighbors a double subscription, concerning which I shall humbly crave your help.

The first concerning ourselves, the masters of families; thus,

*We, whose names are hereunder written, late inhabitants of the Massachusetts (upon occasion of some difference of conscience), being permitted to depart from the limits of that patent, under the which we came over into these parts, and being cast by the Providence of the God of Heaven, remote from others of our countrymen amongst the barbarians in this town of New Providence, do with free and joint consent promise, each unto other, that, for our common peace and welfare (until we hear further of the King's royal pleasure concerning ourselves), we will, from time to time, subject ourselves in active or passive obedience to such orders and agreements as shall be made by the greater number of the present householders, and such as shall be hereafter admitted by their consent into the same privilege and covenant in our ordinary meeting.*

In witness whereof we hereunto subscribe,

Concerning those few young men and any who shall hereafter (by your favorable connivance) desire to plant with us, this,—

We whose names are hereunder written, being desirous to inhabit in this town of New Providence, do promise to subject ourselves in active or passive obedience to such orders and agreements as shall be made from time to time by the greater number of the present householders of this town, and such whom they shall admit into the same fellowship and privilege.

In witness whereof, &c.

Hitherto we choose one (named the officer) to call the meeting at the appointed time; now it is desired by some of us that the householders by course perform that work, also gather votes and see the watch go on, &c.

I have not mentioned these things to my neighbors, but shall as I see cause upon your loving counsel.

As also since the place I have purchased, secondly, at my own charge and engagements, the inhabitants paying by consent thirty shillings apiece, they came, until my charge be out for their particular lots; and thirdly, that I never made any other covenant with any person, but that if I got a place he should plant there with me; my query is this,—

Whether I may not lawfully desire this of my neighbors, that as I freely subject myself to common consent, and shall not bring in any person into the town without their consent; so also that against my consent no person be violently brought in and received.

I desire not to sleep in security and dream of a nest which no hand can reach. I cannot but expect changes, and the change of the last enemy death, yet dare I not despise a liberty, which the Lord seemeth to offer me, if for mine own or others peace; and therefore have I been thus bold to present my thoughts unto you.

This letter is of great value, as it is the earliest account of the ideas and plan of Mr. Williams as to the property relations of the settlers and the establishment of civil government at New Providence. He claims the ideas as original with himself and that he had not communicated them to any one of his neighbors. It was not Mr. Williams' habit to ask advice, except of Governor Winthrop, of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

It is of much importance that we determine relatively the date of this letter before stating the exact plan of Mr. Williams in simple terms. It is clear that it was subsequent to the "Memorandum" transfer of March 24, 1637-38. Mr. Williams states, "Since the place I have purchased \* \* \* at my own charge and engagements."

It is equally clear that the letter was written subsequent to the "Initial Deed," which was given October 8, 1638. Mr. Williams says, "The inhabitants paying by consent thirty shillings apiece as they came until my charge be out for their particular lots," referring to the payment made to Mr. Williams by each of the twelve proprietors, to whom he sold. If these conclusions are correct, as they seem to be, Mr. Williams had sold the lands to a body of twelve men with no conditions as to the methods of administration of the property, as the deed will show:

INITIAL DEED OF THE LANDS CONVEYED BY ROGER WILLIAMS TO TWELVE ASSOCIATE PROPRIETORS.

MEMORANDUM: That I, R. W., having formerly purchased of Canonicus and Miantonomi, this our situation or plantation of New Providence, viz., the two fresh rivers Wonas. and Moosh. and the grounds and meadows thereupon, in consideration of £30 received from the inhabitants of said place, do freely & fully pass, grant and make over, equal right & power of enjoying and disposing the same grounds & lands, unto my loving friends and neighbors S W. W A. T J. R C. J G. I T. W H. W C. T O. F W. R W. and E H. and *such others* as the major part of us shall admit into the same fellowship of vote with us. As also I do freely make & pass over equal right & power of enjoying and disposing the said *land and ground* reaching from the aforesaid rivers unto the great river Pawtuxet with the grass and meadows thereupon, which was so lately given & granted by the two aforesaid sachems unto me. Witness my hand, R. W.

This paper is not dated and is so singularly defective that one cannot understand how it could have passed from man to men, even in the most ignorant stages of society. We have adopted the spelling of our own time to make the paper more intelligible to readers.

On the same day the same body of settlers made an agreement to divide the Williams estate into two parts, the larger section on the north to be called Providence Plantations, the smaller section, on the Pawtuxet river, to be called the Pawtuxet Purchase. Here is the agreement as to the Pawtuxet Purchase, which is self-explanatory:

The eight(h) (day) of the eight(h) moneth in the year, 1638. (October 8, 1638).

It is agreed this day abovesaid that all the Meddow ground at Patuxett, bounding upon the fresh River on both sides is to be impropriated unto those 13 persons being now Incorporated together in our Towne of Providence viz., Ezekiell Holliman, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Thomas Olney, Robert Coles, William Carpenter, William Harris, John

Throckmorton, Roger Williams, John Greene, Thomas James, William Arnold, Stuckley Westcott, and to be equally divided among them, and every man to pay an equal proportion to raise up the sume of 20 £ for the same and if it shall come to passe that some or any one of these thirteene persons abovesaid, doe not pay or give sattisfaction of his or their equal proportions of the aforesaid sume of twentey poundes by this day eight weeks which will be the seventh day of 10th moneth next ensueing that they or he shall leave theire or his proportion of meddow ground unto the rest of these 13 persons to be at their disposeing who shall make up the whole sume of twentye poundes which is to be paide unto Roger Williams.

MEMORANDUM, on the 3d of the 10th m: 1638 (called) according to former agreement, I received of the neighbors abovesaid the full sume of 18£: 11s: 3d.

Pr me ROGERUM WILLIAMS.

The Providence Plantations part of the Williams estate, by the joint act of the thirteen settlers, became a PROPRIETARY, the oldest form of corporate life, originating in New England. It existed for the purpose of holding, managing, selling and conveying lands and estates. A proprietary did not imply a civil compact, or a social organization. The members of a proprietary might live in other civil communities and far apart and had no rights, by reason of such proprietary interest, in the social or civil settlement which the proprietary might aid in establishing. Myles Standish at Plymouth was a proprietor in the *Sowams Proprietary*, now Barrington, and owned a section of land at Nayatt Point, but had no rights or voice in the organization of the town, which embodied it. The local proprietors might later, at their will, organize town government, independent of proprietary rights in lands. The Providence Proprietary held the plantations as tenants in common. No one had an individual right, that was swallowed in the corporation, whose will was expressed by the major vote of the corporate proprietors. It is more than probable that Mr. Williams intended to establish a fiduciary corporation, by which the benefits accruing to the proprietary might be held for the use of later peoples. His generous character would seem to indicate such a purpose. Mr. Dorr says:

The question was left unsettled whether the new domain was to be the property of the whole society and of its political successors of the same fellowship of vote; the few original settlers receiving only small allotments of homesteads and farms, or whether they and their heirs were to be tenants in common of the whole purchase for their own private use.

A great "Hubbub" arose over the settlement of this question, with Mr. Williams on the side of a permanent trust and the "loving neighbors" unanimously in favor of a division of the estate among the original settlers. William Harris was the leader of the Providence community and won out against Mr. Williams, thereby incurring a personal hostility which embittered the relations and lives of both to life's end. The same men whom Mr. Williams had chosen as future co-proprietors of Providence

Plantations, in which he probably intended to include the whole of the sachems' gift, clamored for freehold estates. Between March 24, 1638, and October 8 of the same year, the hot atmosphere of summer time was made ten fold hotter by the torrid debate that was carried on in the initial struggle of the founder with the men he had invited or allowed to become his companions in exile. It is probable that the letter to Governor Winthrop, asking his private advice, was written by Mr. Williams in this period of mental distress, prior to October 8, 1638.

The outcome of the fight, through which "Pawtuxet was allowed (only for peace's sake) to the first twelve" is best stated by Mr. Williams:

Pawtuxet I parted with at a small addition to Providence (for then that monstrous bound or business of upstream without limits, was not thought of). Wm. Harris and the first twelve of Providence were restless for Pawtuxet and I parted with it upon the same terms, viz., for the supply of the destitute ( ; ) \* \* \* When these 12 men (out of pretence of Conscience & my desire of Peace) had gotten the power out of my hands, yet they still yielded to my grand desire of propagating a public interest, and confessed themselves as feoffees, for all the many scores, who were received afterwards paid the 30 £—not to the purchasers as proprietors, but as feoffees for a Town stock.

By the two papers signed by Roger Williams, October 8, 1638, the *memorandum* and the *agreement*, two estates were created, a proprietary and a freehold, and the twelve associates were, on the same day and at the same session, made proprietors of Providence Plantations and freeholders of the Pawtuxet Purchase. As proprietors they became the owners in fee of a home lot of about five acres at Moshassuck and outlands of one hundred acres apiece. As freeholders, each became the owner in fee simple of one-thirteenth of the Pawtuxet Purchase, the consideration accruing to Mr. Williams was thirty pounds for the plantations and twenty pounds for Pawtuxet. In 1654 Mr. Williams, in a letter to the town of Providence, thus refers to the two sales of that memorable October day:

I have been charged with folly for that freedom and liberty which I have always stood for; I say liberty and equality in land and government. I have been blamed for parting with Mooshawsick, and afterwards Pawtuxet (which were mine own, as truly as any man's coat upon his back) without reserving to myself a foot of land, or an inch of voice in any matter, more than to my servants and strangers.

Mr. Williams' son Daniel, in a letter to the town of Providence in 1710, wrote:

It is evident that this Township was my Father's and it is held in his name against all unjust claimers, &c. Can you find such another now alive or in this age; he gave away his lands and other estate to them that he

thought was most in want until he gave away all, so that hee had nothing to help himselfe, so that he being not in a way to get for his supply and being anchant (old) it must needs pinch hard somewhere.

P. S.—If a covetous man had that opportunity as he had, most of this town would have bene his tenents I believe.

The Pawtuxet Purchase included the fine natural meadows on the Pawtuxet river, extending to and possibly beyond the mouth and lower valley of the Pocasset. William Arnold and family had settled at Pawtuxet Falls, on the north bank of the stream, and William Harris had located in the Pocasset Valley. It also included arable lands, probably Indian clearings or cornfields, for a considerable distance north of the river. The northern bounds are clearly defined as Sassafrax Coxe, Fields Point and Hipses Rock, between Neutakonkanut Hill and the Pocasset river. An intermediary bound is given by "an oak tree standing near unto the cornfield" at the Indian town of Mashapaug. This town was located where Auburn now stands, although it is possible that the town of Mashapaug extended north to the big pond of the same name. If Mashapaug pond is taken as the central bound the north line of the Pawtuxet Purchase would be nearly straight from east to west, otherwise an angle would be formed by the detour south to Auburn. However, the line was never run out. The area was about six square miles, or 3,840 acres, which, divided equally with the thirteen purchasers, gave each about three hundred acres—not a large estate for the early days. To each of the thirteen may be added a proprietor's right in the Providence Proprietary.

We have reached the point to recall the "Memorandum" No. 2, which appears as a supplement to No. 1, "The Sachems' Deed." This writing claims to be a confirmation by Miantonomi of all that had preceded and adds "*up the streams of Pawtucket and Pawtuxet without limits, we might have for the use of our cattle.*" This postscript was signed by Roger Williams and Benedict Arnold, but not by the sachem. It bears the date of the 9th day of May, 1639, but the year was not on the original paper, which was written by Thomas James, "a Man of Learning and Wisdom," "once Pastor of the Church at Charlestown."

This "Memorandum" opened a controversy, instituted legal battles and aroused personal hatreds that long survived in families, even after the original actors had passed away and the events had become ancient history. The issue was over the intent of the writing—did it convey a new and incorporeal privilege, subject to withdrawal, or was it simply an explanatory codicil, making clearer the imperfect outlines of the original "deed?" William Harris was the leader of the party who steadfastly maintained that it was given to strengthen and confirm all that had gone before, while Mr. Williams, with his usually emphatic language, took the ground that no new rights in lands were given and that the Pocasset river was the western bound of the Sachems' gift.

## CHAPTER XIV

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BOSTON THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



## CHAPTER XIV.

### BOSTON THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL.

The peculiar circumstances and events that preceded and attended the founding of the Colony of Rhode Island, on Aquidneck, are singular in nature and of fascinating interest. As the story will show, the whole body of people who were the original settlers on Rhode Island migrated from England to make homes in the Bay Colony. Most of them, perhaps all, had no thought of establishing a new settlement outside the Bay, and made Boston their home, by purchasing land, owning farms, building houses, becoming freemen, engaging in business and taking an active part in all industries incident to founding a new seaport town,—the metropolis of the colonial life and business of New England. For eight years, the future Rhode Island colonists were engaged, mind and soul, in all the interests and industries and activities of this new town. They were leaders in Church and State,—founders of Boston and the Bay Colony, in the largest and truest sense.

In March, 1638, a strange event occurred,—the most marvellous and the most momentous in the early history of the Bay Colony. It was no less than the expulsion of a large group of the most intelligent, the most influential, the wealthiest citizens, freemen, officeholders, church and society workers of Boston. More than sixty families,—over 300 souls,—owning lands and houses in Boston, conducting important businesses, and related by many strong ties to all the affairs of the town and Colony, were driven in the wintry season to depart from the town they had helped to found, into a cruel exile,—whither,—only a wise and overruling Providence could know or determine. A cruel fate attended the expulsion of the Huguenots from France,—cruel alike to both parties. Volumes have been written on the forced exile of the Pilgrims from Lincolnshire to Leyden. The banishment of Roger Williams from Massachusetts has been the ground of debate of thousands of apologists and Puritan defenders. The poet Longfellow, in “Evangeline,” has given a limited immortality to the forcible transfers of the Acadian Colony to a Southern clime. From Boston to Aquidneck was a shorter journey, with a most successful conclusion for Democracy and Soul Liberty. This chapter reveals the story in part, illustrating the Old World Dream, translated into a New World Realism. A Colony of loyal men and women were banished. A new state arose, dedicated to Civil and Religious Liberty, named RHODE ISLAND.

Liberty of person, of estates, and of all just rights, has always been a strong passion of the Anglo-Saxon race and mind. The wresting of the

rights and liberties of an English subject from the hands of King John, in Magna Charter, was a part only of a series of concessions of royal prerogatives, secured by the demands of the common people. The colonization of North America, in the seventeenth century, found its source and inspiration in the love of and the demand for a larger measure of civil and religious freedom than was then possessed by the English people. The great middle class of Britain had absorbed the doctrines of the Reformation and their minds had become thoroughly saturated with the teachings and idealism of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, including the freedom moving events of the Apocrypha, then an integral part of the Protestant Bible. Slowly, with the introduction of parts or the whole of the newly published Bible, the homes of the English people became schools of religious study, and often of theological debate. The history and doctrines of the Bible were matters of daily conversation in the homes, on the streets, in the market places, and in political and social circles. Large portions of the Bible were committed to memory. A divine infallible book was worth more than fallible priests and human literature. The voice of God was an authority far superior to the orders of the Bishop or the canons of the church. The Hebrew invasion of England not only gave new life to liberty loving people of the British Isles, but inspired a new literature, and to ardent minds, instinct with reform, it suggested new ideals in leadership and new fields for operation, as Canaan was the outcome of Egyptian bondage. The new love for the Old Testament nomenclature led parents to reject Pagan or royal names for the Hebrew. The English records are flooded with Old Testament names from Adam and Eve, through Noah, Methusaleh, Moses and Aaron, to Kerenhappuch and Mahershalalalhashbaz. Moses, David, Isaiah, Jesus and Paul, were familiar characters of daily study. Hume says, "Cromwell hath beat up his drums clean through the Old Testament—you may learn the genealogy of our Saviour by the names in his regiment. The muster-master uses no other list than the first chapter of Matthew."

It is no wonder then that civil freedom became the waking dream of common English folks, and that freedom in thought and worship, as revealed in the Old Testament, in the Hebrew Commonwealth and in the New Testament, and in the sublime democracy of Jesus, should become the two most powerful and far-reaching forces that entered into sixteenth century English thought and life. From the opened Bible, were the new ideas as to religion and government. John Milton was a most faithful interpreter of the Puritan conception of the new revelation, reviving in enduring historic verse, the visions of Dante and the literalism of the Church Fathers. As an inspired book, every page, every line, every word of the Bible was inspired and received a literal interpretation. An eternal Heaven with its blessedness had its anticlimax in an eternal Hell with its

awfulness. The daily contemplation of religious themes and eternal issues gave to the Puritans a sober, an austere, almost a tragic character. Every event of life was by the Divine will and foreknowledge. "The chief end of man was to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." Macaulay says, "The Puritan was made up of two different men. The one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his king." In his great eulogium, the great Englishman calls the Puritans the most remarkable body of men which the world has ever produced. And these were Bible-made men.

The Hebrew Commonwealth became the study of the Puritan leaders. God was its law-giver, its governor, its judge. What nobler idealism can be conceived for a state than to have the Supreme Ruler of the Universe as its founder, His laws as their rule of action, His guidance as a Providential director and governor, His benediction as final judge. To the individual or collective Puritan, in England, or America, God's presence was real, not a fiction, and his overruling power translated trials into blessings, and made the rough and crooked paths of life seem smooth and straight.

Mr. Williams named his first resting place, Providence, as Jacob had ages before called his Peniel, and as late as 1842, the Puritan spirit still inhered in the statesmen of Rhode Island, in the making of the State Constitution, under which we now live. The preamble reads: "We, the people of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which he hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing upon our endeavor to secure and transmit the same unimpaired to succeeding generations, do ordain and establish this Constitution of government:" 1. In truth, the Hebrew concept of a Divine Governor, which inspired Williams and Clarke as Puritan leaders, still lives.

Possession of a people, newly-born into the life of the Spirit of Liberty, Democracy was coming to be esteemed a divine right of the Commons, as Monarchy had been and was then regarded by the Aristocracy as the divine right of the King; the right of the people to choose their own rulers and make their own laws was only harking back to the days of the Witenagemot when manhood was sovereignty. Then Britons did not need to study the Democracy of the Greek Agora and of the Roman Forum, for their own fathers had practiced in the arts of freemen in the forests of Germany and on the shores of the North Sea in ages past. As to soul-liberty, the most sacred and universal of natural human rights, every sword of persecution drawn, and every fagot lighted at the stake, was the harsh act of tyranny against the essential, the eternal truth, that the soul of man must ever be free to choose, love and worship.

England of the seventeenth century was a Church-State, as is England of the twentieth. The new birth of a great body of the people to the ideas of a broader civil freedom and church independency, inaugurated the Pilgrim church, the exile in Holland, and the settlement of the Plymouth (Mass.) Colony in 1620. Another body of Englishmen, agreeing in large measure with the Pilgrims as to a Democratic State, but still adhering to the traditional Church-State idea, organized another colonial plan, under the title of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in America. These people were styled Puritans and were as bitterly hated by the Church-State of England as were the Pilgrims.

John Fiske says of the Puritans: "Their principal reason for coming to New England was their dissatisfaction with the way in which affairs were managed in the old country. They wished to bring about a reform in the Church in such wise that the members of a congregation should have more voice than formerly in the church government, and that the minister of each congregation should be more independent than formerly of the bishop and civil government. \* \* \* Finding the resistance to their reforms quite formidable in England, and having some reason to fear that they might themselves be crushed in the struggle, they crossed the ocean in order to carry out their ideas in a new and remote land, where they might be comparatively secure from interference."

The Puritan State came into being in New England, when Governor John Winthrop, leading an English colony of 800 settlers, landed at Naumkeag, now Salem, Mass., in June, 1630. On that date, Plymouth Colony had 300 settlers, and Winthrop found 300 at Salem who had settled at that port since 1628. In 1630 the total colonial population of New England did not exceed 1,400. The keynote of the Puritan enterprise is found in a noble and tender farewell letter of Gov. John Winthrop and his official associates, "to the rest of their brethren in and of the Church of England," written on the ship *Arbella*, at Yarmouth, April 7, 1630. That they were not *Separatists* as were the Plymouth colonists, is expressed in the sentence, "Who esteem it our honor to call the Church of England, from whence we arise, our dear mother; and cannot part from our native country, where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears in our eyes, ever acknowledging that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common salvation we have received in her bosom, and sucked it from her breasts." Among the names of signers of this letter of loyalty to the English Church-State appears the name of William Coddington, who, later, figures so large in the history of the Colony of Rhode Island.

The same sentiment towards the English Church and State was expressed by Rev. Francis Higginson, who came to Salem in 1628, with the Endicott colonists: "We will not say, as the Separatists were wont to

say at their leaving of England, 'Farewell Babylon, farewell Rome,' but we will say 'farewell dear England,' farewell the Church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there. \* \* \* We go to practice the positive part of Church reformation, and to propagate the Gospel in America." All the founders of the colonies of Providence Plantations and of Rhode Island were originally residents in and in most cases freemen of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. As the founding of both the Colonies on Narragansett Bay was due to sharp differences between these founders and the policy and government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, it seems wise to state at the outset the principles and policy of the Puritan State of the Bay.

The Massachusetts Company was an organized government, whose field of operations and colonial powers were clearly defined by the royal Patent granted by Charles I., under date of March 4th, 1628-9. Corporation meetings were held, officers elected and various business transacted in England. The chief officers were a Governor, a Deputy Governor, a Treasurer and eighteen Assistants, to be elected from time to time by the major vote of the freemen of the company. Matthew Craddock was the first Governor. The above named officers constituted THE GENERAL COURT, which usually met, while in England, at the House of the Deputy Governor. The General Court legislated for the company and could by major vote enlarge the body of freemen. At one of the meetings held in England it was voted to elect two clergymen as freemen in order that their prayer might "sanctifye" their proceedings, as the end of their mission was "chiefly the glory of God." The settlement at Salem, under John Endicott and Rev. Francis Higginson, in 1628, was made by the Company of the Massachusetts Bay. Before the departure of the Company for New England, John Winthrop was elected Governor and William Coddington an Assistant.

In 1630, the whole Bay Company was transplanted bodily from England to Salem. As Mr. Lodge has said, "It was the migration of a people, not the mere setting forth of colonists or adventurers." Most of the families were wealthy; many held high social rank; all were well educated for their time; most were members of the Church of England, from which it was a sore trial for them to separate themselves. These people, nicknamed Puritans at home, crossed the sea for four chief reasons:

*First*—To establish homes and a new social order in New England.

*Second*—To establish a reformed State-Church.

*Third*—To establish a reformed Church-State.

*Fourth*—To carry the Christian faith into foreign parts to save a Pagan people.

It is easy to see that a choice body of men and women were demanded for such an enterprise, involving as it did the reform of Anglo-

American society throughout. It certainly required the sifting of kingdoms to find the seed for such planting. The Bay Company owned all the lands within its Patent by royal consent. The Indian rights of occupancy, as tenants at will, were dissolved by agreement or purchase. The qualification of a freeman was based on church membership. Property rights and civil government were thus in the absolute control of the Bay Colonists. Two sources of danger were constant. One was the interference of the Crown with the vested rights of the Colony. The second was the incoming and intrusion of men and women whose acts and influence seemed subversive of the policy of the Puritan Commonwealth. As self-preservation is the first law of states as well as of individuals, we must exercise large consideration and great charity for a people setting up a new government in the wilderness, as well as for those who, differing from them in matters of opinion or practice, entered reasonable protests against their public policy and accepted separation and exile in preference to conformity to Puritanism, as interpreted by Wilson, Winthrop and Endicott. The Puritan ship of state was outward bound, on voyage on new and uncharted seas. Her officers and crew were inexperienced in sea-craft; strange would it have been, had not her passengers, in narrow straits and in threatening storms, advised and urged new courses with furling of sails. Stranger still, if in the peril of the hour, the officers had not in sheer desperation, set on shore, in desert places, the leaders in incipient mutiny. The figure suggests what is to follow:

Between 1630 and 1638, the Bay Colony, with its chief seat at Boston, had more than double its population. Boston furnished an excellent harbor for the passenger-bearing vessels. Among the arrivals we find the names of the following persons who shared in founding the two Rhode Island Colonies: William Coddington, Roger Williams, William Harris, William and Benedict Arnold, William and Anne Hutchinson, William Baulston, Samuel Wilbour, Henry Bull, Randall Holden, John Clarke, Samuel Gorton, John Coggeshall, Edward Hutchinson, John Sanford, William and Mary Dyer, William Aspinwall, John Porter, Philip Sherman, William Brenton, Robert Harding, Nicholas Easton, Thomas Savage and others.

Concerning Rev. William Blackstone, a dweller at Boston, who invited Gov. Winthrop and his fellows to settle on the Peninsula, and who in 1634 became the first permanent white settler on Providence Plantations, we have already written. To Mr. Williams and the reasons for his exile another chapter will be devoted. In this chapter, we propose to show what Boston and the Bay Colony did in preparing Clarke, Coddington, the Hutchinsons, Bull and others for founding the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck.

In order to participate in affairs civil or ecclesiastical in the Puritan Colony, it was necessary to become a freeman, by joining the colonial church, which was organized at Cambridge, Mass., August, 1630. This State-Church was not the English church of ordinances, ceremonials and vestments, presided over by a priesthood appointed by bishops and directed by canons and synods. It was a simple, democratic institution, adopting its own covenant and articles of faith and electing its own clergy by a major vote of the membership. The order was called Congregationalism,—a cult contemporaneous with Episcopacy and Presbyterianism. Each church was an independent organism, recognizing Jesus Christ as its only leader and acknowledged governor. In such a church, free from most of the forms of the Episcopal Church of England, the membership came into the practical exercise of individual rights, in affairs spiritual. This was a school of freedom and equality.

So far as can be ascertained all the adult members of the Rhode Island Colony were, at the time of their separation from the Bay Colony, members of some one of the Puritan churches of the Bay Colony,—most were in good standing in the Boston church, of which Rev. John Wilson and Rev. John Cotton were pastors.

As freemen, the males were invested with the right of voting for all civil officers and affairs and of holding any civil office. All civil officers were elected at stated times by the major vote of the freemen. The annual town meeting was the occasion for the freeman to exercise the new privilege of choosing his rulers in town and Colony, and in making the laws which should be observed in both. Here, at Boston, in the first school of freemen, the founders of Aquidneck learned and practiced their first lessons in democratic government. As members of the First Church, it may be safely assumed that they were a people of godly walk and conversation,—not mischief makers, nor disturbers of the peace of the town. That they intended to make the Bay Colony their permanent home is evident from the facts of land ownership, erection of comfortable houses, businesses engaged in, clearing the lands for gardens and farms, etc., etc. While the freemen were thus engaged, their wives and daughters set the standards of economy and social and intellectual life. We may believe that popular amusements were few and that the household duties of housewives in a new town in the wilds were most laborious and engrossing, yet we may imagine that afternoon teas and quiltings did afford privileges of social acquaintance and true fellowship quite as substantial and soul-satisfying as the more elaborate, costly and fashionable modes of social intercourse of the twentieth century, in the metropolis of New England. These old-time Boston men and women of 1630-38 had their hands full of hard work, their minds full of new thoughts and contrivings, and their

hearts full of human interest and achievement. This school of free thought and action, on the shores of Massachusetts Bay, was a grand preparation through experience, hardship, discipline, courage, faith, for later and more vigorous duties and responsibilities awaiting them below the horizon of their daily vision and expectation, in a new field of action, in Narragansett Bay.

The founding of a well ordered seaport town, like Boston,—the port of entry and exit of all the commerce of that day, was a matter of no small importance, and our future founders of Newport and Portsmouth had their experience there in shaping municipal affairs. In the first board of ten selectmen of Boston, we find the names of William Coddington, John Coggeshall and William Brenton. In 1636, the names of William Hutchinson, John Coggeshall, John Sanford, William Aspinwall, William Brenton and William Balston appear as fathers of the town, one-half of the board. In 1637, the future settlers at Aquidneck had a majority of one in the town government. This was the last year of their residence in Boston.

In the higher and more responsible offices of the Bay Colony our future founders of Rhode Island bore a conspicuous and honorable part. Of the General Court, the legislative body of the Colony, William Coddington was a member from 1630 to 1638. As an Assistant to the Governor, he was elected by the freemen in 1629, 1630, 1632 to 1638. He filled the office of Colonial Treasurer for three years, 1634-5 and 6. In 1636, Mr. Coddington was chosen a judge to preside over courts in Boston, Dorchester, Weymouth and Hingham. In 1635, Mr. Coddington was chosen a member of the Committee on Military Affairs, with the Governor, Deputy Governor, John Winthrop, John Endicott and other chief citizens of the colony. He was also on a committee with Gov. Winthrop to fix the conditions of settlement at Andover. In 1637, he was chosen one of a committee of five to adjust matters relative to the soldiers sent to Block Island. Thus Mr. Coddington was a public officer in the Colony for more than eight years, filling the most responsible offices, by the choice of the people and the General Court. He was also a merchant and built the first brick house in the town of Boston.

William Brenton, a cofounder of Boston and Aquidneck, was chosen to superintend the building of a House of Correction in Boston, in 1634, the year he was made a freeman. He was a selectman of Boston in 1634-5-6-7. In 1635, he was appointed on a committee to consider what action should be taken with John Endicott of Salem in defacing the English flag by cutting out the cross. The same year he was appointed to furnish "at the public charge" all that was needed at the prison in Boston. He was elected a Deputy from Boston to the General Court in 1635-6-7.

John Coggeshall was a silk merchant of Boston. He was made a freeman Nov. 6, 1632; was elected a deacon of the First Church in 1634, holding the office until his removal to Aquidneck. In 1634 and 1636, he was a Boston selectman, and in 1634-5-6-7, a Deputy from Boston in the General Court. In 1634, he gave £5 towards the seafort, was chosen overseer of public ammunition, and in 1635 was chosen Commissioner of Commerce for Boston, and was elected as a tax assessor for the Colony.

William and Anne Hutchinson arrived in Boston in 1634, joining the First Church with four children,—Richard, Francis, Faith and Bridget,—the same year. Two sons, Edward and Elisha, and possibly a third, George, were already at Boston, on the arrival of their parents. William Hutchinson had a grant, not long after his arrival, of the site now known as the "Old Corner Bookstore," which then extended from Washington street, on the north side of School, to the City Hall lot. Governor Thomas Hutchinson of the Bay Colony was the great-grandson of William and Anne Hutchinson, through son Elisha and grandson Thomas. Major Thomas, founder of the Savage family in America, representative, speaker and assistant, noted as a staunch soldier and Indian fighter, married Faith Hutchinson, from whom came James Savage, the great annalist of New England Genealogy.

William Hutchinson was elected twice as a selectman of Boston, served two years as a Deputy from Boston in the General Court, and with William Coddington was a Judge in the County Court. Both, besides their Boston property, had large farms at Mt. Wollaston. Mrs. Anne Hutchinson acted as physician, advisor and midwife to Boston mothers.

Many other names of Aquidneck founders are found among the recorded lists of church members, freemen, officeholders and business men of Boston. The evidence is conclusive that these men and their associates obtained valuable training and experience in the Boston school for freemen, which fitted them to become the founders of a new commonwealth.

Another factor of great value in a new civil life is the family tie and relations. At Boston, acquaintances were made, as they nowhere else can be, in a new society in the wilderness. Pioneer life makes strong and abiding friendships. Common hardships and joys are chains of steel, which never break. Large families also have a strong binding power, uniting whole communities in numberless ways.

William Coddington had thirteen children: William Hutchinson, seven; Joseph Clark, brother of Dr. John Clark, ten; Robert Carr, six; Richard Borden, ten; Caleb Carr, eleven; John Coggeshall, eleven; John Briggs, six; John Crandell, nine; John Cranston, ten; George Gardiner, fourteen; William Harris, thirteen; Randall Holden, eleven; William Brenton, eight. Boston men and women were certainly making wise pro-

vision for an unforeseen venture,—a new plantation. Race suicide was not a crime of the foremothers.

Much more could be written of the important services, individual and collective, of the Aquidneck settlers in the founding of Boston, during the first eight years of the development of social order, civil government and a church of the Puritan faith. It must be clear to all that they shared the highest honors and posts of service of the town and colony with Winthrop, Endicott, Bradstreet, Bellingham, Dudley and Saltenstall. Their experiences in all the various offices and functions gave them the exercise of their varied talents in civil and ecclesiastical concerns, and to judge of the excellency and defects in organization and administration. The lessons thus learned in their practical daily life were inwrought in their civic thought and consciousness, and became their guide in the establishment of a new state. "Magistracy" under law was the keynote in the structure of the English State. It held the same vital position in the Puritan Commonwealth of the Bay and later in the new Colony soon to be planted in the midst of Narragansett Bay. Historian Arnold says: "Their plans were more matured at the outset than those of the Providence settlers. To establish a Colony independent of every other was their avowed intention, and the organization of a regular government was their initial step."

Few events in New England history are so sublimely trying as the rending of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1638, when more than sixty families,—and more than 300 persons—composing a Colony three times the size of the Pilgrim Colony at Plymouth, in 1620, were "dismissed" and summarily sent forth into cruel exile, in the midst of wintry weather, on stormy seas, to find a hitherto unknown harbor of shelter among savage beasts and savage men. Let us direct our thoughts to the issue, fraught with such tremendous and far-reaching results to both parties.

The first four years of Boston history—1630-1634—was a period of social and civic acquaintance and adjustment. Protection from local perils and the safeguarding of colonial rights of franchise, made social, political and even religious unity an absolute necessity. A hostile home government in England might at any moment, and without just cause, put an end to local government and make the political life of Boston people more burdensome than it had been the land of their birth, while a hostile Indian raid might at any moment, by torch and tomahawk wipe out the infant Colony. In union alone was safety.

The next four years—1634-1638—constitute an era of differentiation and separation, singularly enough, along lines of the most abstruse religious thought and denominational cleavage, involving under the hard and obscure title, the Antinomian Controversy, the most vital elements of civil and social liberty. By reason of it, Boston became the storm-center of New England, not only of sharp debate, but of deep-seated and violent

hatred, causing divisions of families and social circles, business estrangements, political animosities, church excommunications and colonial banishments.

Concerning this remarkable mental and spiritual phenomenon, which stirred the whole New England pioneer life to its deepest depths, Mr. Charles Francis Adams, late president of the Massachusetts Historical Society, writes as follows: "In its essence, that controversy (Antinomian) was a great deal more than a religious dispute; it was the first of the many New England quickenings in the direction of social, intellectual and political developments,—New England's earliest protest against formulas. \* \* \* It was designed by no one. No one at the time realized its significance. It was to that community just what the first questioning of an active mind is to a child brought up in the strictest observance of purely conventional forms. \* \* \* They represented the ideas of extreme civil liberty and religious toleration. \* \* \* The issue between religious toleration and a compelled theological conformity, was, as a matter of established policy, then to be decided. It was, and the decision lasted through five generations. \* \* \* For good or evil, it committed Massachusetts to a policy of strict religious conformity. \* \* \* The domination of 1637 was not disturbed or seriously shaken until the era of the Unitarian movement under Channing, in 1810."

Anne Hutchinson was the leading spirit in this strife of tongues, and this home of Anne and William Hutchinson, occupying the site of "The Old Corner Book Store," Boston, was the place and scene of the most ardent discussions that ever exercised the minds, influenced the judgments and determined the acts of the whole body of the young metropolis.

The Hutchinson family left Boston, Old England, in July, and landed in Boston, New England, in the autumn of 1634. William Hutchinson, a man of good blood and a fair estate, was grandson of John Hutchinson, a former Lord-Mayor of the city of Lincoln, England. Anne, his wife, was the daughter of Rev. Francis and Bridget (Dryden) Marbury, of London. The mother, Bridget, was sister of Sir Erasmus Dryden, Baronet, grandfather of the poet Dryden. Her sister, Catharine Marbury, was the wife of Mr. Richard Scott, who settled at Providence.

The Rev. John Cotton, pastor of St. Botolph's Church in Boston, the favorite minister and teacher of the Hutchinsons, had removed to Boston, New England, in 1633, and had become the associate minister to Rev. John Wilson, pastor of the First Church of the Bay. Mr. Cotton's liberal teachings in the home church had endeared their relations, and his personality was a strong magnet to draw the Hutchinsons to Boston, the following year.

The Hutchinsons, parents and children, at once joined the Puritan Church of Boston, and entered heartily into all the active life of the new

town. Mrs. Hutchinson, a woman of fine social qualities and the mother of a large brood of children, soon became an influential factor in society, and as nurse, physician and midwife, a benefactor and friend to all the families in Boston.

Governor Winthrop calls Mrs. Hutchinson a woman "of a ready wit and bold spirit," and her husband, "a man of very mild temper and weak parts, and wholly guided by his wife." Rev. Thomas Weld, the most bitter enemy of both, tells us that the wife was "a woman of a haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit, and a very voluble tongue, more bold than a man, though in judgment and understanding inferior to many women."

It is more than probable that Mr. Weld's opinion was shaped somewhat by the lashings of Mrs. Hutchinson's voluble tongue.

The historian Palfrey speaks of Mrs. Hutchinson as "a capable and resolute woman," and "a kind and serviceable neighbor, especially to persons of her own sex in times of sickness; and by these qualities united with her energy of character and vivacity of mind, she acquired esteem and influence." Gov. Arnold calls her "a woman of great intellectual endowments and of masculine energy, to whom even her enemies ascribed unusual powers, styling her 'the masterpiece of woman's wit,' and describing her as 'a gentlewoman of an haughty carriage, a busy spirit, competent wit and a voluble tongue,' who, by a remarkable union of charity, devotion and ability, soon became the leader, not only of her own sex, but of a powerful party in the state and church, so that her opponents have termed her by a species of anagrammatic wit 'the Nonesuch,' was Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, the founder and champion of the Antinomian 'heresy'."

Equally complimentary are the opinions of Bancroft, Adams and Dr. Ellis. Bancroft calls her "a woman of such admirable understanding, that her enemies could never speak of her without acknowledging her eloquence and ability." Mr. Adams says she possessed "a strong religious instinct, and a remarkably well-developed controversial talent, wonderfully endowed with the indescribable quality known as magnetism." Dr. Ellis estimates her as "a pure and excellent woman, to whose person and conduct there attaches no stain \* \* \* of a high spirit, and gifted in argument and speech."

Here, evidently, is a woman of vision, of power, of passion, of mental vigor and clearness, and of moral and spiritual convictions. She is strong enough in her own right to set at naught the traditions of men as to a woman's sphere in the church and in the civil society, who opens her house once and often twice a week for a meeting of Boston women to discuss the live questions of church and state. She goes even further and invites the men of Boston to sit with the women, in this first open Forum

in America, or of its kind in the world, to discuss the topics of supreme moment, as seen in that early day. It is not a school of tattlers or scandal-mongers, but of serious Puritans, debating serious concerns, and a most serious and high-souled woman presides and sets the keynote for the thinking body of town folks, who crowd her "large and commodious home." Mrs. Hutchinson had won her way into the hearts of Boston society by her sympathetic and helpful services as midwife to young mothers and a domestic physician and nurse to the sick of both sexes. Boston society responds quickly to her invitations to her house and hospitality. But readiest of all, Boston lends a quick ear to her discussion of magistrates and town government, to her views of household economics and child training, and most earnestly to her views of religious doctrines and discipline as taught and administered by Rev. John Wilson and Rev. John Cotton, the ministers of the First Church.

In matters of religion and theology, Anne Hutchinson was a seer, a prophetess, "a Daniel, come to judgment." Three great spiritual concepts possessed her. She believed that the human soul could and did hold close communion with the Divine Over-Soul. She believed in direct, special revelations from the Divine to the human—from God to her own soul. She also believed in a spiritual justification of the soul of man, with God, through Faith. She clearly and fearlessly declared herself a teacher of the doctrine of Justification through Faith, rather than of Sanctification through Works; the Covenant of Faith rather than of Good Works. These doctrines constituted substantially what was styled "Antinomianism," an obscure word and of little value in our day, except as an historic relic in the museum of antiquated theology.

Mrs. Hutchinson's intensely practical temper led her to make application of her teachings to her own church and its ministers. She openly asserted and constantly affirmed that Rev. John Wilson was only a cold formalist, living in and teaching "The Covenant of Works." So far did she carry her dislike to the doctrine and its teachers, that she would walk out of the meeting house whenever Mr. Wilson and others of his thinking began to preach, and many, of like belief with herself, followed her example. Her favorite teacher, Rev. John Cotton, was to her mind, a true disciple in "The Covenant of Grace," as was Rev. John Wheelwright, her brother-in-law, the minister of the church at Braintree, Mass. Mrs. Hutchinson's kindly spirit and generous services had won the hearts of the people of Boston. Her earnest arguments, clothed in winning words, won their intellectual assent and cordial adherence, so much so that the audiences at her Thursday afternoon meetings were larger than those at the First Church on Sundays. The leading men of Boston as well as the women, became adherents to her teachings, and at one time all but five members of the First Church claimed to be her followers. Among them

were William Coddington, Sir Harry Vane, Governor, and the whole of the Aquidneck delegation. Gov. Winthrop stood with Rev. John Wilson in opposition to Mrs. Hutchinson. Outside of Boston, the ministry was unanimously opposed to her doctrines and teachings, and when she declared the clergy of The Bay Colony to be "cold formalists," "dead, without a name to live," "whited sepulchres," "hypocrites," "false teachers," etc., etc., they felt that, unless this new sectarian was silenced, their holy craft was in great danger of an ignominious overthrow, and that downfall would be due to a woman! Was not the colony a theocracy? Was not God's Word the rule of life in the new state? Was not the ministry the interpreters and teachers of that Word? Shall Heresy be allowed to destroy a Puritan Commonwealth? Shall the ministry, the church, the theocracy, the new order of statehood, go down under the assaults of a feminine foe "whose tongue was as a sword and her sex a shield?" The voice of the clergy of the Bay Colony was almost as the voice of one man in an emphatic determination to put down this persistent advocate of adjudged pestilential and heretical doctrines. Rev. John Cotton and Rev. John Wheelwright aligned themselves with the Antinomian cause, although, in the case of Mr. Cotton, his attitude was later changed to one of opposition to his former English parishioner and favorite.

For four years,—1634-1638—Mrs. Hutchinson had taught a new Revelation as to Church and State. In the midst of much debate that, in our time, seems incoherent and meaningless, this new school emphasized certain great, essential principles of modern Democracy, or what Mr. Lodge calls at that age liberal Puritanism. The open Forum at the Hutchinsons was none other than the free and untrammelled debate of the New England town meeting, in which John Adams tells us our liberties were first asserted and assured. Liberty of thought and speech were not only claimed as the right of freemen, but was fully illustrated and confirmed. But liberty of thought and expression is only another name for Religious Liberty, and it is not too much to affirm that in the Hutchinson School there was, for three years, the most absolute exercise of Religious Freedom, as a basic principle of a Free State.

Still more, the larger conception of a Free Commonwealth was evolved, in which all classes of people—clergy and laity, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned,—stood as equals before the law, with rights as to life, liberty and justice, unabridged, except as forfeited by crime, or lost by incompetency. It is difficult to construct a broader platform in concerns civil, social, economical and religious, than we find claimed, advocated and for a brief time enjoyed, in the Hutchinson Free State, at the corner of Washington and School streets, Boston, in the Bay Colony, 1634-1638. Even the claimants for the rights of man, irrespective of sex, may assume Anne Hutchinson of Boston as their

leader and first great advocate and practitioner, so far as the conditions of her time made such claims and practice valid.

Rev. John Wheelwright, minister to the Congregational church at Braintree, born at Alford, Lincolnshire, 1592, was a non-conformist preacher, learned and eloquent, and withal a defender of "The Covenant of Grace." On a Fast Day in January, 1637, he delivered what Mr. Adams calls "the most momentous sermon ever preached from the American pulpit." The sermon was a masterly defence of "The Covenant of Grace," as taught by Mrs. Hutchinson and himself, "against pagans and anti-Christians, and those that runne under a Covenant of Works." It was a bold affirmation of a spiritual faith in opposition to a worldly, uninspired orthodoxy. In March, 1637, the General Court declared Mr. Wheelwright guilty of contempt and sedition, deferred the sentence, and changed the seat of government to Cambridge, as Boston was in full sympathy with the accused minister. Troublous days are on at Boston. The spring election turned on the issue as to "The Covenants"—orthodoxy triumphed. Governor Vane was defeated. Coddington failed of an election as an Assistant, and all of Mrs. Hutchinson's adherents on the general ticket were defeated. Fisticuffs were engaged in by the most devout, and Pastor Wilson climbed a tree to harangue the voters, all of whom were church members. Vane soon went back to England. Coddington was elected a Deputy to the General Court from Boston, as were William Aspinwall and John Coggeshall. Rev. John Cotton saw a new light in the election returns and was "won over to an uncompromising orthodoxy." Winthrop, Governor, and Endicott, Dudley, Bellingham, Bradstreet, Saltonstall and others of the orthodox party sat in the "Seats of the Mighty." In the spring election of 1637 in the Bay Colony the hands on the time piece of Progress and Spiritual Enfranchisement were set back into the twilight hours and the pendulum ceased to beat.

August 30, 1637, the first Cambridge Synod of Magistrates and Ministers met at Newtown, and before it Mrs. Anne Hutchinson was summoned to answer to eighty-two "erroneous opinions" cherished and taught in her school at Boston. Single-handed and alone she withstood the assailts and answered the questionings of this large lay and clerical court, nearly all of whose numbers were hostile to the defendant. To those who care to read the celebrated polemic dialogue, reference is made to "Antinomianism in Massachusetts Bay Colony" by Charles Francis Adams. As was to be expected, Mrs. Hutchinson was heard and condemned by the Synod after a session of twenty-four days, and her case was referred to the Great and General Court of the Colony as well as to the church of which she was a member, for such discipline as those bodies might see fit to exercise.

The session of the General Court of the Bay Colony in November, 1637, was an event of mighty significance in the annals of American History—probably greater than any that has since succeeded, for in and by it the magistrates declared various opinions heretical and also voted banishment to a large body of the most eminent and valuable citizens of Boston and other Colonial towns. As a result of such action and the forcible migration of this class of people, new towns were established in Northern and Southern New England and a new Colony was created on Aquidneck in Narragansett Bay, which embodied in its primal acts the principles of Civil and Religious Liberty, against whose establishment at Boston, the orthodox party of the Bay Colony, led by Governor John Winthrop, had so strenuously and successfully set themselves. "The Lord brethren" of Boston had shown themselves the lineal descendants of the Bishops of the mother land, and the several acts of scission made possible and certain the founding and permanent establishment of a liberal Puritan State on Aquidneck, in Narragansett Bay, dedicated to Civil and Soul Liberty from its first inception.

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them how we will."

Events of moment follow in rapid succession. We turn to the pages of the Records of The Colony of Massachusetts Bay in New England for their establishment:

Nov. 2, 1637. "Mr. John Wheelwright, being formerly convicted of contempt and sedition, and now justifying himself and his former practise, being to the disturbance of the civill peace, hee is by the Court disfranchised and banished, having 14 days to settle his affaires, and if within that time hee depart not the patent, hee promiseth to render himselfe to Mr. Staughton, at his house, to bee kept till hee bee disposed of.

"Mr. John Coggeshall being convented for disturbing the publike peace was disfranchised, and enjoyned not to speake anything to disturb the publike peace, upon pain of punishment." Mr. Coggeshall was a Deacon of the First Church and was recently elected as a Deputy from Boston as was Deacon William Aspinwall. Both were unceremoniously expelled from the General Court and a new election ordered. Mr. Coddington was also a Deputy from Boston, but was allowed to retain his seat in the court.

"Mr. William Aspinwall being convented for having his hand to a petition or remonstrance, being a seditious libell, and justifying the same, for which, and for his insolent and turbulent carriage, hee is disfranchised and banished, puting in sureties for his departure before the end of the first month next ensuing.

"Mrs. (Anne) Hutchinson (wife of Mr. William Hutchinson), being convented for traducing the ministers and their ministry in this country, shee declared volentarily her revelations for her ground, and that shee should be delivered and the Court ruined, with their posterity, and thereupon was banished, and the meane while was committed to Mr. Joseph Welde untill the Court shall dispose of her."

These acts were all passed under date of Nov. 2, 1637. At the next sitting of the Court, on Nov. 15, several more citizens and freemen were disfranchised for signing the Wheelwright protest. Five days later, Nov. 20, the General Court passed an act that, for unadulterated, high handed tyranny, has few more flagrant examples in the history of half civilized states. It was worthy of the insolent audacity of Archbishop Laud and the Star Chamber. Here it is fresh from the Records of The Colony of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. I, p. 211:

"Whereas the opinions and revelations of Mr. Wheelwright and Mrs. Hutchinson have seduced and led into dangerous errors many of the people heare in Newe England, insomuch as there is just cause of suspicion that they, as others in Germany, in former times, may, upon some revelation, make some suddaine irruption upon those that differ from them in judgment, for prevention whereof it is ordered, that all those whose names are underwritten shall (upon warning given or left at their dwelling houses) before the 30th day of this month of November, deliver at Mr. Cane's house, at Boston, all such guns, pistols, swords, powder, shot and match as they shall bee owners of, or have in their custody, upon paine of ten pound for every default to bee made thereof; which armes are to bee kept by Mr. Cane till this Court shall take further order therein. Also, it is ordered, upon like penalty of £X that no man who is to render his armes by this order shall buy or borrow any guns, swords, pistols, powder, shot, or match, untill this Court shall take further order therein."

Fifty-eight citizens of Boston are named and seventeen from nearby towns. On a groundless suspicion, for no crime, seventy-five heads of families are subjected to the humiliation of carrying to Mr. Cane's house in Boston, all the means of personal and family protection they possessed, thereby setting at naught the well established doctrine of the house the castle, not even entering the premises by a legal search warrant.

Of the men of Boston, who, within a few months of this were founders of a new town at Aquidneck, were William Hutchinson, husband of Anne, Dea. William Aspinwall, Samuel Cole, William Dyer, husband of Mary, Edward Rainsford, John Batton, John Sanford, Richard Cooke, Richard Fairbanks, Oliver Mellows, Samuel Wilbour, John Oliver, Richard Gridley, Zachariah Bosworth, William Townsend, William Pell, Richard Hutchinson, James Johnson, Gen. Thomas Savage, John Odlin, Gamalia Wayte, Edward Hutchinson, Isaac Gross, Richard Carder, Robert Harding, Richard Wayte, John Porter, Jacob Elliott, Thomas Wardell, William Wardell, William Baulston, William Freeborn, Henry Bull, William Salter, Dr. John Clarke, Dea. John Coggeshall, Mr. Easton, of Newbury, Richard Bulgar and Philip Sherman, of Roxbury, all of whom were included in the act of disarmament of peaceable citizens, whose only civic offence was their endorsement of the liberal views of Mrs. Hutchinson and Rev. John Wheelwright as to a free church in a free state. It seems

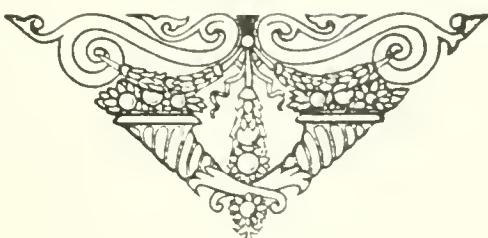
almost unbelievable that Governor John Winthrop and men of his type should have committed an act of such a criminal character, for which they could have been held amenable for treason against the state in the Courts of England. But the unjust order was obeyed, arms and ammunition were given up by these hitherto loyal citizens, for the most part church members and freemen of the Bay Colony. Other plans and the founding of other towns and a new Colony possess the minds and hearts of these men and women, whose opinions as to civil and religious freedom are so at variance with the theocracy of Boston.

The closing acts of the drama are a worthy sequel to the events which were inaugurated by the advent of Anne Hutchinson to Boston in 1634. The time is March, 1638. The place is the meeting house of the First Church of Boston. The Rev. John Wilson is in the pulpit, and Anne Hutchinson stands before him to receive the sentence of excommunication, with a crowded assembly as witnesses. It is the hour of the jubilant triumph of Puritan orthodoxy over a more liberal faith and a more liberal civil policy. Wilson and Winthrop are vindicated; Anne Hutchinson is silenced. Listen to the words of condemnation rolling out of the mouth of the Puritan Pope of Boston against the female culprit at the foot of the sacred altar of the temple of the despised Jesus,—“Therefore in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the name of the church I do not only pronounce you worthy to be cast out, but I do cast you out; and in the name of Christ do I deliver you up to Satan, that you may learn no more to blaspheme, to seduce and to lie; and I do account you from this time forth to be a Heathen and a Publican, and so to be held of all the brethren and sisters of this congregation and of others; therefore I command you in the name of Christ Jesus and of this church as a leper to withdraw yourself out of the congregation.” It is difficult to think of such an awful utterance from a minister of the Gospel of Love of the Christ. One can almost see Angels weep and Satan laugh.

As Anne Hutchinson turned from the altar to leave the house, bearing in her heart the heavy anathemas of the church she had loved, out of the awe-stricken throng came Mary Dyer, one of her disciples and devoted friends, took her arm and walked by her side down the aisle and out of the house. One story has it that William Coddington also walked by her side. If not in fact, he did in spirit, as did all the devoted band who were preparing for a new exodus to a new land of promise. One standing at the meeting house door said to Mrs. Hutchinson, “The Lord sanctify this unto you.” She replied, “The Lord judgeth not as man judgeth. Better to be cast out of the church than to deny Christ.” A stranger in Boston, pointing at Mary Dyer, asked, “Who is that young woman?” The reply was, “It is the woman which bore the monster.” Twenty-four years later, Mary Dyer was hung on Boston Common for being a Quakeress.

One more event is of record when we turn to the great "experiment" for which eight years of Boston history has been the preparatory school,—the founding of The Colony of Rhode Island, in Narragansett Bay. We have already noted the warnings of the Bay Colony, the notes of the impending separation, exclusion and banishment. On the 12th of March, 1638, the summons is issued against Mr. Coddington and others as follows: "Mr. William Coddington, Mr. John Coggeshall, Gov. Baulston, Edward Hutchinson, Samuel Wilbore, John Porter, John Compton, Henry Bull, Philip Shearman, Willi Freeborne and Richd Carder, these haveing license to dept, summons is to go out for them to appear (if they bee not gone before) at the next Court, the third month, to answer such things as he objected."

The Stone which the builders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony rejected, shall soon become the corner of a new Commonwealth, styled The Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck.





## CHAPTER XV

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CONCERNING DR. JOHN CLARKE







SUPPOSED PORTRAIT OF DR. JOHN CLARK

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONCERNING DR. JOHN CLARKE.

Dr. John Clarke of Aquidneck was in the fourth generation from John the first, through John and Thomas. He was the third son of Thomas and Rose Clarke and was born in Westhorpe, Suffolk Co., Oct. 8, 1609. An older brother, Thomas, born 1605, and a younger brother, Joseph, born Dec. 9, 1618, were admitted inhabitants of Aquidneck, 1638, and united with their brother John in the formation of the First Baptist Church of Newport, R. I., in 1644. A fourth brother, Carew, born Feb. 3, 1602, also settled at Newport.

Little is known of the early years of Dr. Clarke, but it is absolutely certain that they were devoted to the acquisition of learning under the best conditions of that period of English life as we find him at the age of twenty-eight holding two professions, that of a physician and also an ordained minister of the Separatist faith. The best evidence we have as to the source of his academic education is obtained from a catalogue of the University of Leyden, Holland, 1575-1875. The entry is follows:

*Johannes Clareq. Anglus, 17 July, 1635-273.  
"Album studioscum Academiac Lugduno Batavia,  
1575-1875.  
Accedunt nomina curatorum et professorum per eadem secula."*

Translation.

"John Clarke, England 17 July, 1635-273."  
A Catalogue of the Students of the Academy at Leyden, Batavia,  
1575-1875.

Also the names of officers and teachers for the same period."

As Dr. Clarke was a Non-Conformist, it seems easy to believe that he obtained his university education in this liberal town, the home of the Pilgrims of Plymouth from 1607 to 1620. It is also reasonable to assume that he was a member of or in fellowship with the Liberals of Holland, who had, as early as 1611, affirmed the right of all men to religious liberty and the duty of obedience to lawful government. One of Dr. Clarke's biographers states that "he attained high repute for ability and scholarship in languages, including Latin, Greek and Hebrew, law, medicine and theology." As a man of classical learning and accurate scholarship appears from an "item" in his will: "Unto my loving friend, Richard Bailey, I give and bequeath my Concordance and Lexicon to it belonging, written by myself, being the fruit of several years study: my Hebrew Bibles, Buxtorff's and Passor's Lexicon, Cotton's Concordance and all the rest of my books."

In the library of Harvard College is an ancient book, entitled "Holy Oyle for the Lampes of the Sanctuarie; or Scripture Phrases Alphabetically Disposed for the Use and Benefit of such as desire to speake the Language of *Canaan*, more especially the sonnes of the Prophets who would attain elegancie and sublimiitie of expression, by John Clarke, Master of Arts. London, printed by Aug. Mathews for Rob. Milbourne, and are to be sold at his shop at the Greyhonnd in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1630."

The book,  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ , pp. 535, is dedicated in Latin to the Bishop of Lincoln and is dated at Lincoln, England, Nov. 12, 1629. It is a subject index to the Bible or an Analytical Concordance. The author says, "Amongst the world of booke which are in the world, I never hitherto sawe or heard of any of this nature in any language now extinct. \* \* \* \* Come and see—a booke which may *first* serve instead of a Concordance for the finding out of many places in the Bible, especially of homogeneal sense, though not words, all or alwayes. Second, supply the want for a commentary upon divers passages of Holy Scriptures. \* \* \* Thirdly, by the various expressions of the same things not only furnish a preacher with heavenlie and sweet elegancies, but also very much enrich his invention. \* \* \* The book is not, I confess, so exactly done as I could wish; yet done it is as I have been able in my successive houres and time borrowed sometimes from sleepe (being first compared and since written out in the night) as thou mayeth easily perceive me to have beene nodding now and then." As there is but one known Concordance by John Clarke, M. A., it is inferred that Dr. Clarke of Rhode Island is the author of the volume above described.

Dr. Clarke was married three times. His first wife was Elizabeth Harges, daughter of John Harges, Esq., of Bedfordshire, England, whom he married before he left his native land in 1637. She died at Newport, without issue. February 1, 1671, he married Mrs. Jane Fletcher by whom he had a daughter, born February 14, 1672. The mother died April 19, 1672; the daughter died May 18, 1673. His third wife was Mrs. Sarah Davis, widow of Nicholas Davis. She died in 1692, surviving him sixteen years.

In 1652, Dr. Clarke published in London a book styled "*Ill Newes from New England*," in which he introduced the substance of a tract issued in 1651, touching New England and particularly Rhode Island, in which he discourses on the occasion of his going out with others from Massachusetts Bay. As this record of Dr. Clarke is the first reliable statement of a participant in the events he relates it is worthy of special attention here.

"In the year 1637 I left my native land, and in the ninth month of the same, I (through mercy) arrived in Boston. I was no sooner on shore,

but there appeared to me differences among them touching the covenants, and in points of evidencing a man's good estate, some prest hard for the Covenant of works, and for santicification to be the first and chief evidences; others prest as hard for the Covenant of grace that was established upon better promises, and for the evidence of the spirit, as that which is a more certain, constant and satisfactory witness. I thought it not strange to see men differ about matters of Heaven, for I expect no less upon Earth. But to see that they were not able so to bear with others in their different understandings and consciences, as in these uttermost parts of the world to live peaceably together, whereupon I moved the latter, for as much as the land was before us and wide enough with the profer of Abraham to Lot, and for peace sake, to turn aside to the right hand or to the left. The motion was readily accepted and I was requested with some others to seek out a place which I was ready to do; and thereupon by reason of the suffocating heat of the Summer before, I went to the North to be somewhat cooler, but the Winter following proved so cold, that we were forced in the Spring to make towards the South; so having sought the Lord for direction, we all agreed that while our vessel was passing about a large and dangerous Cape, we would cross over by land, having *Long Island* and *Deleware-Bay* in our eie for the place of our residence; so to a town called *Providence* we came, which was begun by one M. *Roger Williams* (who for matter of conscience had not long before been exiled from the former jurisdiction) by whom we were courteously and lovingly received, and with whom we advised about our design; he readily presented two places before us in the same *Naragansets Bay*, the one upon the main called *Sow-wames* (Barrington), the other called then *Acquedneck*, now *Rode-Island*: we enquired whether they would fall in any other Patent, for our resolution was to go out of them all; he told us (to be brief) that the way to know that, was to have recourse unto *Plymouth*; so our Vessell as yet not being come about, and we thus blockt up, the company determined to send to *Plymouth*, and pitcht upon two others together with myself, requesting also M. *Williams* to go to *Plymouth* to know how the case stood; so we did; and the Magistrates thereof very lovingly gave us a meeting; I then informed them of the cause of our coming unto them, and desired them in a word of truth and faithfulness to inform us whether *Sow-wames* were within their Patent, for we were now on the wing, and were resolved through the help of Christ, to get clear of all, and be of ourselves, and provided our way were clear before us, it were all one for us to go further off, as to remain neer at hand; their answer was, that *Sow-wames* was the garden of their Patent, and the flour in the garden; then I told them we could not desire it; but requested further in the like word of truth and faithfulness to be informed whether they laid claim to the Islands in the *Naraganset Bay*, and that in particular called *Acquedneck*? they all with a cheerful countenance made us this answer, it was in their thoughts to have advised us thereto, and if the provident hand of God should pitch us thereon they should look upon as free, and as loving neighbours and friends should be assistant unto us upon the main, &c. So we humbly thanked them, and returned with that answer: So it pleased the Lord by moving the hearts of the natives, even the chiefest thereof, to pitch us thereon, and by other occurrences of providence, which are too large here to relate: So that having bought them off to their full satisfaction, we

have possessed the place ever since; and notwithstanding the different understandings and consciences amongst us, without interruption we agree to maintain civil Justice and judgment, neither are there such outrages committed mongst us as in other parts of the Country are frequently seen."

Dr. Clarke's convictions as to the rights of the individual conscience in religious concerns were clear and well established. He was also clear and strong as to full liberty in civil affairs. For these reasons he at once allied himself with the Hutchinson party on his arrival in Boston, and therefor was refused a residence and disarmed, with others, by the order of the General Court.

We here note one of those remarkable events in history where there is a conjunction of the man and the hour. The Bay Colony has drawn the sharp line of division and dismemberment and has proceeded to discipline the offending citizens, not in harmony with the Theocracy. Deacons Coggeshall and Aspinwall of the First Church, recently elected representatives of the General Court, are expelled from the Legislature, for their religious opinions. Coddington is defeated as Assistant for the same reason,—an office he has held since 1630. Governor Harry Vane, a strong supporter of Mrs. Hutchinson, has gone down to defeat before the clerical party of the colony and has left Boston for the home land, never to return. A religious war is on. A civil war is feared and the homes of the people are invaded by the "Act of Disarmament." Such experiences as these were soul-trying to the people of Boston, especially to those who composed the party of protest. Exile stares the Hutchinson party in the face. Homes, just built, must be given up,—property sacrificed, business interests destroyed. Family and social ties must be surrendered. A new wilderness must be invaded. Savage hospitality again be invoked. New foundations must be laid which shall give security to property, life, liberty, civil and spiritual. The exodus period is at hand. Who shall be the leader of God's chosen flock from the bondage of the Bay Colony?

The man is at hand. It is Dr. John Clarke, fresh from the clerical and medical studies of the liberal University of Leyden, and thoroughly inoculated with the spirit of Democracy. He is in his twenty-ninth year,—a strong, stalwart fellow,—over six feet in height, magnetic,—enthusiastic,—having a judicial mind,—a calm temper,—a bold and resolute will. He arrives in Boston when the town is stirred as never before or since, in a contest for the emancipation of the soul of man from the chains of a spiritual bondage. A freeman himself, he at once casts in his lot with advocates and disciples of a liberal Democracy, and at once is chosen their new leader and proposes the formation of a new state in a new land, free from the galling bonds of their present conditions, in the Bay Colony. On the shoulders of such a leader, at such a juncture, is the chief responsibil-

ity placed of seeking a place of refuge and rest for a people whose hearts were set on civil and soul freedom.

Dr. Clarke tells us in "Ill Newes from New England" the state of affairs at Boston, on his arrival in November, 1637. He states that he moved for choosing a new location for a new Colony and that the motion being readily accepted, he with others were requested to seek out a place, without the jurisdiction of any Colony. The story of the choice of Aquidneck is best told by Dr. Clarke, himself:—"By reason of the suffocating heat of the summer before, but the winter following proved so cold (1637-8), that we were forced in the spring to make towards the South."

Concerning Dr. Clarke's services in the founding of Portsmouth and Newport, the details will be told in the chapters relating to those towns. It is sufficient here to state that he was the recognized founder and father of the Aquidneck Plantations, the author of the Compact of Portsmouth and the adviser and leading spirit in the organization and administration of the island towns. While he was an adherent of the school of Anne Hutchinson, he was not a blind follower, but held fast to Independency and carried on public worship at Newport, until in 1644, he organized a church "on the scheme and principles of the Baptists." Dr. Clarke was the minister and teacher of this church until his death, with the exception of the years 1652-1663, while absent in London on Colonial business. It bears the name of the First Baptist John Clarke Memorial Church of Newport and has held the doctrines of the Particular or Calvinist Baptists from its founding until the present time. Several Baptist churches of differing opinions have sprung from the mother church at Newport. The old church,—claimed by many and with much of truth and justice in the claim, as the oldest orthodox Baptist church in America,—is still true to its traditions and history and will preserve, with increasing interest as the years come and go, the name and the fame of its distinguished Founder,—Dr. John Clarke.

In the year 1652, a book appeared in London, printed by Henry Hills living in Fleet-Yard, next door to the Race and Crown, written by John Clarke, Physician of Rhode Island in America. Its title was "*Ill Newes from New England or a Narrative of New England's Persecution*. When Wherein is Declared that while Old England is becoming new, New England is becoming old." This book had for its motive the remarkable story of the trials of Dr. John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes and John Crandall, free-men of the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck and members of the Baptist church of Newport, and according to the title of the Narrative is "A Faithful and True Relation of the Prosecution of Obadiah Holmes, John Crandall, and John Clarke, merely for Conscience towards God, by the Principal Members of the Church, or Commonwealth of Massachusetts in New England, which rules over that part of the world." As one reads

the story, it is found to be a real case of persecution for the sake of religion and involves in the clearest fashion the principle of soul liberty. Dr. Clarke uses the distressing experiences of the party to illustrate the full meaning of suffering for a religious conscience and introduces eight logical and scriptural "arguments against persecution for cause of Conscience." The work shows the bright figure of religious liberty portrayed on the dark background of Massachusetts' intolerance,—the spirit of John Clarke of Newport in contrast with that of Governor John Endicott of the Bay Colony.

The story reads like one of the historic books of the old Hebrew Scriptures. "It came to pass that we three (Obadiah Holmes, John Crandall and John Clarke), by the good hand of our God, came into the Massachusetts Bay upon the 16 day of the 5th Moneth (16)51; and upon the 19th of the same, upon occasion of business, we came unto a town in the same Bay called Lin (Lynn), where we lodged at a blind man's house neer two miles out of the Town, by name of William Witter, who being baptized unto Christ waits, as we also doe, for the Kingdom of God, and the full consolation of the Israel of God."

On the 20th of July, Sunday, Dr. Clarke preached at Mr. Witter's house, Witter being a member of his church at Newport and too infirm to attend "the Publike Assemblie." To this service at Witter's, "four or five strangers came in unexpected." During the service, two constables entered the house and with "clamorous tongues" interrupted Dr. Clarke's discourse, "more uncivilly," says he, "than the Pursivants of the old English Bishops were wont to do." Their Warrant required them to go to the house of William Witter and to search from house to house "for certain erronious persons, being strangers; and them to apprehend and in safe custody to keep and tomorrow morning (Monday) be eight of the Clock to bring before me—Robert Bridges."

The offenders were watched over that night "as theives and robbers," and being brought before the magistrate on Monday, were committed to prison until the next County Court, July 31. "Without producing either accuser, witness, jury, law of God, or man," John Clarke was sentenced to pay a fine of twenty pounds "or else be well whipt." Obadiah Holmes was to pay a fine of "thirty pounds or be well whipt," and John Crandall "five pounds or be well whipt,"—Governor John Endicott issuing the sentences. On an appeal and a hearing on matters of faith and conscience, Dr. Clarke was set at liberty on the 11th of August, 1651. Crandall was dismissed on payment of his fine. Holmes refused to pay the fine of thirty pounds and would not allow his friends to pay it for him, saying that "to pay it would be acknowledging himself to have done wrong, whereas his conscience testified that he had done right and he durst not accept deliverance in such a way." He was accordingly punished with thirty lashes from a three-

corded whip, on Boston Common, with such severity "that in many days, if not some weeks, he could take no rest, but as he lay upon his knees and elbows, not being able to suffer any part of his body to touch the bed whereon he lay." He told the Magistrates, "You have struck me as with roses. Although the Lord hath made it easie to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge." On the death of Dr. Clarke in 1676, Mr. Holmes, a martyr for Soul Liberty, succeeded him as minister of the First Baptist Church of Newport. It is an easy matter to write books on Soul-Liberty. Easier still, is it to profess a belief in it. The rub comes when an officer commits to an old-time Colonial jail; when a Governor inflicts cruel judgments, and when an unwilling or an unfeeling Magistrate extorts heavy fines or inflicts public scourging with three corded whips, with teeth of scorpions. Better proof is not needed of the depths and sincerity of Aquidneck men in the doctrines of civil and religious liberty than the piety and patriotism of Clarke, Crandall and Holmes of Newport.

Concerning Dr. Clarke's service in the Rhode Island Colony, his work in and for the Royal Charter of 1663, and his later work, the story will be told in succeeding chapters.

#### TRIBUTES TO DR. JOHN CLARKE.

His grand motive.—A just liberty to all men's spirits in spiritual matters.

For his honoured and beloved Mr. John Clarke, an eminent witness of Christ Jesus agst ye bloodie Doctrine of Persecution, &c.—Roger Williams.

We must remark that this Colony (Rhode Island) was a settlement and plantation for religion and conscience sake. \* \* \* The first planters of this Colony, and Island, fled not from religion, order or good government, but to have liberty to worship God and enjoy their own opinions and beliefs. \* \* \* We find that religion and conscience began the Colony. \* \* \* The posterity of a people, who were guided to this happy Island, as a safe retreat from the stormy winds, as a place of freedom to practice every branch of religion in. \* \* \* Our fathers established a mutual liberty of conscience. \* \* \* Liberty of conscience was never more fully enjoyed than here. \* \* \* His memory (Dr. John Clarke's) is deserving of lasting honor for his efforts towards establishing the first government in the world, which gave to all equal and religious liberty. \* \* \* He was the original proprietor of the settlement on the Island and one of its ablest legislators. No character in New England is of purer fame than John Clarke.—Rev. John Callender, A. M., Century Sermon, 1739.

John Clarke and his brave companions peaceably purchased "the Eden of America" from its aboriginal lords, and founded a Christian Colony in the midst of heathen barbarism.

The two men who had been so long rivals in their public life, as agents of their respective colonies, but who had always maintained a mutual

friendship, passed from the world almost together. Dr. John Clarke expired two weeks after Governor Winthrop, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. To him Rhode Island was chiefly indebted for the extension of her territory on both sides of the Bay, as well as for the royal charter. He was a ripe scholar, learned in two professions, besides having had large experience in diplomatic and political life. He was always in public life under the old Patent, as Commissioner and as General Treasurer, from the first election of Commissioners held under it, until sent to England, where he was employed as Agent of the Colony for twelve years. On his return, he served as a Deputy in the Assembly from the first election under the Charter till he was made Deputy Governor, to which position he was three times elected, and served twice, closing his public life with that office, five years before his death. With all these public pursuits, he continued the practice of his original profession as a physician, and also retained the pastoral charge of his church, as its records show. His life was devoted to the good of others. He was a patriot, a scholar, and a Christian. The purity of his character is conspicuous in many trying scenes, and his blameless, self-sacrificing life disarmed detraction and left him without an enemy. The Colony was largely indebted to him for advances made in securing the Charter.—Samuel G. Arnold, Historian of Rhode Island.

The people (of Aquidneck) having recently transferred the judicial power from their own control to the Court and Juries, they enacted this law protecting liberty of conscience, not choosing to trust the judiciary with the keeping of that sacred principle for which they had transported themselves, first from England and then from Massachusetts. It was the foundation of the future statutes and Bill of Rights, which distinguished the early laws and character of the state and people of Rhode Island from the other English Colonies in America.—Bull's Memoirs of Rhode Island.

Dr. John Clarke was the original projector of the settlement on Rhode Island, in 1638, and was subsequently one of its ablest legislators.

He was the first regularly educated physician in Rhode Island and was an able, pious and distinguished man.—Prof. William Goddard, Brown Univ.

Dr. Clarke's name must be dear to every citizen of Rhode Island, who venerates our ancient free religious institutions.—The Newport Republican.

Dr. Clarke practiced as a physician in London from 1652-1663.—Dr. Usher Parsons.

It may be proper to take some particular notice of Mr. Clarke, who left as spotless a character as any man I knew of, that ever acted in any public station in this country. The Massachusetts writers have been so watchful and careful to publish whatever they could find which might seem to countenance their severities, they used towards dissenters from their way that I expected to find some thing of that nature against Mr. Clarke, but have happily been disappointed.

Dr. John Clarke was a principal instrument in procuring Rhode Island for a people, persecuted elsewhere.—Rev. Isaac Backus, Historian, 1777.

Marble tablet in Hall of Newport Historical Society, *erected by the Newport Medical Society, Dec., 1885:*

To  
JOHN CLARKE, PHYSICIAN  
1609-1676  
FOUNDER OF NEWPORT  
AND OF THE CIVIL POLITY OF RHODE ISLAND.

SCHOLAR, PHYSICIAN, MINISTER AND STATESMAN.

In 1676, died John Clarke, scholar, physician, minister and statesman; above all, a pure patriot. Always in public affairs, his "blameless, self-sacrificing life" left him without an enemy, although in these times strife everywhere prevailed.

John Clarke, more practical than Roger Williams, seized every opportunity to ally himself with the most liberal religious thought of Continental Europe, as well as of England.

John Clarke laid his topographical lines as skillfully as he negotiated politically.

They (the Quakers) flocked into Newport. Here they found a free atmosphere and many people with minds open for the reception of their ideas.

Dr. John Clarke's expenses in England, while procuring the royal charter, the secured foundation of the Colony, had been slowly paid and never were fully liquidated. Yet no one deserved more from the planters than this enterprising, wise and forecasting statesman. Roger Williams berated Providence that they "ride securely by a new Cable and Anchor of Mr. Clarke's procuring."

Sagacious as Charles the Second was, he built better than he knew, when he allowed absolute freedom of conscience in the little dependency of Rhode Island.—William B. Weeden, in "Early Rhode Island."

Dr. John Clarke came to Boston, Nov., 1637. He became a follower of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson and is venerated as the founder of Newport.—James Savage, Gen. Dictionary.

Who can describe the feelings of Clarke when he received from the hands of Charles II. that charter, which it was the great aim of his life to obtain. The Colony was now safe; and there was at least one spot on the face of the globe where every man could sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to make him afraid. \* \* \* The joy in the Colony was equally great. \* \* \* If ever a people were sincere in expressing their gratitude, it was when they voted thanks to their Sovereign Lord, King Charles the Second; to the most honorable Earl of Clarendon; and to their faithful agent, John Clarke. \* \* \* It (the Royal Charter of 1663), constituted Rhode Island the Morning Star of Liberty to the world, and gave her a name and an influence that will never die. It was the wonder of the age when it was given, as it has been the admiration of each suc-

ceeding age. \* \* \* The Colony then assumed its permanent form, and was embodied in institutions that continue to this day, its central principle being *Freedom, Especially Religious Freedom, Secured by Fundamental Law.*—Rev. S. Adlam, pastor Dr. John Clarke Memorial Church, Newport, 1871.

I firmly believe that there was not then a better balanced mind than Dr. John Clarke's in all America and Rhode Island never had a more devoted friend. He was prodigal of himself in her service, and when he died he gave the remnant of his fortune for the relief of her poor and the bringing up of her children to learning.—Hon. William P. Sheffield, Newport Oration, 1876.

John Clarke Monument.—“Rhode Island owes to John Clarke a monument of granite and a statue of bronze.”—John R. Bartlett, Secretary of State for Rhode Island, 1855-1872.

LETTER OF MOSES BROWN TO PROF. J. D. KNOWLES.

Providence, 17 of 6 mo., 1830.

Respected Friend:—

Thy letter of the 15th is before me. I have long wished that a correct account of Roger Williams could be made as our town and state is therein interested, but I apprehend thou wilt find it difficult to effect it with that candor and intelligence thou had when I first was acquainted by information thereof in thy youthful days, by reason that R. W.'s character has been written by his friends, who claim him of their party in religious matters. I mean not only Baptists but Presbyterians and others biassed by other means. Should thou correct the errors evidently made by Elder Backus (from others and himself) and from him repeated in English writers thou may not satisfy thy friends, and thou must calculate to find many friends which thou (probably) never heard of him that thou can but consider against his character as well as things favorable. Baptist writers in some respects disagree. Doct. Edwards on inquiry among our old people concluded and has left it in his history, now in our Historical Society's library, that R. W. was never considered (first) an Elder, but that Chad Brown was the first Elder in the Baptist Church in this town, but Elder Backus has taken much pains to establish R. W. the first and in every other way to raise the character of him beyond what well authenticated facts on Records disprove, and in his endeavor to exalt Roger's christian character, has endeavored to lay waste that of ancient Friends, for which he was called to account before some of his friends.

R. W.'s first writing was very different from his latter, both as to matter and manner and he is accused by his opponent, John Cotton, then as not adhering to the truth. It will appear by Roger's own account that he was turned out of office by the King's party and by Baxter and Crosby's History of the Baptists and indeed by Backus that he was the Father of the Seekers in England; that he was with Cromwell and the Long Parliament in England, to whom he addressed his writings and appeared so strong a Cromwellian, that he could not bear those who were for the King's party. Hence his difficulties arose with Gov. Coddington and

others in this state and was also connected with the long dispute with the first 12 who purchased 12-13 of what he had from the natives and by his joining the after comers which became the strongest party, a law suit was kept up for 50 years and the Elder Backus says was settled in Roger Williams time, but was not finished until many years after his death by the heirs of the first purchasers who had the third time to apply to England to effect and finally settle by themselves in 1711. I mention these things as hints to give thee some idea of the difficult task, and I apprehend Roger's character if fully looked into will not appear better than it now stands with the Baptist Society.

Having been desirous a true history of our settlement and progress might be made, I long since made some small progress in obtaining some account of facts and among them some such as mentioned appear not to have been generally known, and I, having early probably like thyself conceived very high notions respecting the character of R. W., it was difficult for me to get so far released from them to admit many things I found on inquiry to be realities; but at length, I became thoroughly satisfied that he was a very changeable man and yet a strong-minded, self-conceited, persevering man, making an unusual character for a man of talents and education.

This off-hand sketch is not to discourage thee, but to prepare thy mind to receive proof of these statements, which with others, I shall be willing to give thee information, as far as my time and ability will admit of, if thou should conclude to proceed with the arduous task and feel willing and with thy usual candor proceed in the work.

I don't here touch his treatment of the Quakers as that will appear in history from himself and those opposed.

Dr. Edwards was of opinion that Dr. and Elder, (for he was both), John Clarke, a person of learning and persecuted in Massachusetts, ought much more to be considered the Father of this state and especially of the Baptists in it than R. Williams; to this effect he was heard to express himself by divers persons.

He was Agent in England and procured the charter in which Religious Liberty is so fully mentioned, but that which R. W. procured does not contain a word about it, tho Backus states it to be Roger William's Charter, &c.

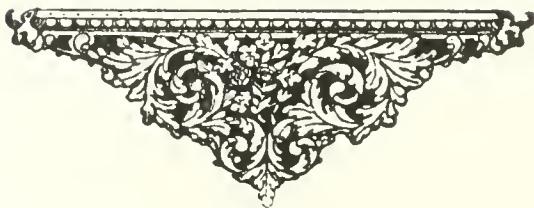
I remain thy friend,

MOSES BROWN.

Moses Brown, the writer of the above letter, was the son of James and Hope (Power) Brown and in the fifth generation from Chad Brown, who was the first ordained pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence. He was born in Providence, September 23, 1738, and died September 6, 1836,—within 17 days of 98 years of age. His grandfather, James, was pastor of the First Baptist Church from 1726 to his death in 1732. Moses Brown knew many men and women who knew Roger Williams well and his knowledge of the history of early Providence exceeded that of any man of his time. This letter to Prof. Knowles, the historian of

Roger Williams, is from the "Moses Brown's Papers," in the Rhode Island Historical Society, and so far as the writer can ascertain, has never been printed.

Moses Brown was eminent as a citizen, as a student, as a philanthropist, and his views as to Roger Williams and his times and of Dr. John Clarke have a commanding value, as they express the opinions of the period just following the life and death of Mr. Williams.



## CHAPTER XVI

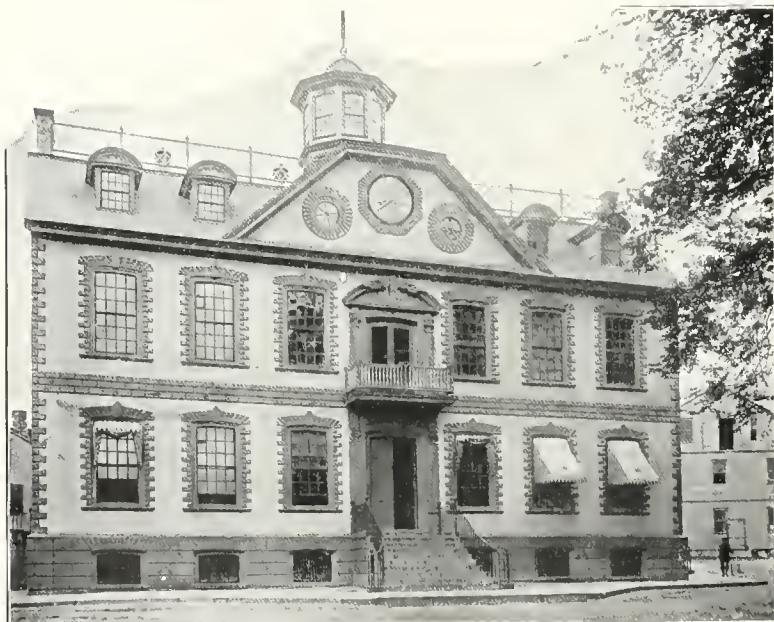
THE FOUNDING OF PORTSMOUTH AND NEWPORT







REDWOOD LIBRARY, NEWPORT, ERECTED 1750



OLD STATE HOUSE, NEWPORT

Built about 1740

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE FOUNDING OF PORTSMOUTH AND NEWPORT.

The plans for founding a new colony, as prepared by Dr. John Clarke in the autumn of 1637, were matured at Boston during the few months that intervened before the act of practical scission, which sent so many of the leading and influential families of Boston into exile from the Bay Colony. Dr. Clarke was eminently fitted for the leadership of a fresh enterprise of this sort. He had not yet made a settlement for himself and family; he was not bound by any ties of association or relationship with Boston interests, and could act the part of an impartial judge and diplomat, for which he was by nature and education so thoroughly fitted. Besides, his liberal education for two professions, both of which he adorned, secured for him the full confidence of all the dissenting body.

Dr. Clarke has already told us in his own language how the new migration was led to choose Aquidneck as the place of settlement of a new town,—it was outside the pale of any existing patent, adjoining a friendly people in Plymouth Colony, and purchaseable from the Narragansetts. In this purchase as well as in the choice of location, Mr. Williams acted the hospitable, the friendly part. Concerning the purchase of Aquidneck, Mr. Williams, writing in 1658, says, “I have acknowledged the rights and properties of every inhabitant of Rhode Island (Aquidneck) in peace; yet, since there is so much sound and noise of purchase and purchasers, I judge it not unreasonable to declare the rise and bottom of the planting of Rhode Island (Aquidneck) in the fountain of it. It was not price nor money that could have purchased Rhode Island. Rhode Island (Aquidneck) was obtained by love; by the love and favor which that honorable gentleman, Sir Henry Vane and myself had with that great sachem Miantonomi, about the league which I procured between the Massachusetts English, etc., and the Narragansetts in the Pequot war. It is true I advised a gratuity to be presented to the sachem and the natives, and because Mr. Coddington and the rest of my loving countrymen were to inhabit the place and to be at the charge of the gratuities, I drew up a writing in Mr. Coddington’s name, and in the names of such of my loving countrymen as came up with him and put it into as sure a form as I could at that time (amongst the Indians) for the benefit and assurance of the present and future inhabitants of the island. This I mention, that as that truly noble Sir Harry Vane hath been so great an instrument in the hand of God for procuring of this island (Aquidneck) from the barbarians, as also for procuring and con-

firming the charter (1644), so it may by all due thankful acknowledgement be remembered and recorded of us and ours which reap and enjoy the sweet fruits of so great benefits and such unheard of liberties amongst us."

The interest shown by Roger Williams towards his "loving countrymen" was duly and deeply appreciated by the founder of Aquidneck and the services rendered were abundantly repaid when in securing the charter of the town of Providence, in 1649, the form of government of the Rhode Island Colony was made the pattern in the first organization of the town of Providence, at the head of the bay.

It appears that the contract between Mr. Coddington "and his friends" and Canonicus and Miantonomi, in the purchase of Aquidneck, was made at Providence, soon after the return of the committee from their visit to Myles Standish for the purchase of Sowams (Barrington). Acting on the advice of the Plymouth people which was confirmed by Mr. Williams, Aquidneck was bought and Mr. Williams tells us he wrote the deed, the first of record of any of the lands of Rhode Island, for actual settlement. As will be seen, it is only a transfer of a life estate, although it was esteemed and treated as a warranty instrument by both parties. It is as follows:

Deed from Cannonicus and Miantunomu chief sachems of the Narragansetts, of the purchase of the island of Aquidneck (Rhode Island) to William Coddington and others. March 24, 1637-38.

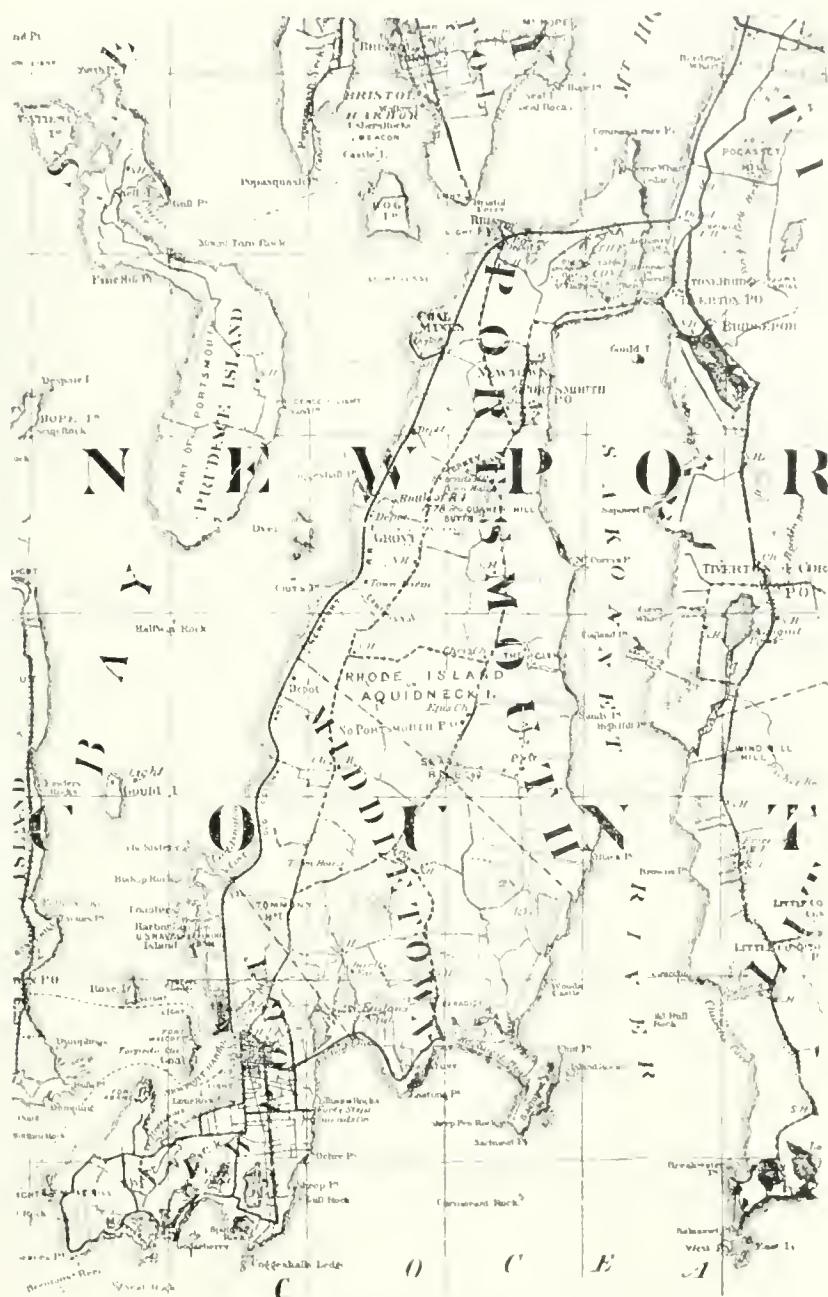
The 24th of ye 1st month called March, in ye yeare (soe commonly called) 1637.

MEMORANDUM. That we Cannonicus and Miantunomu ye two sachims of the Nanhiggansitts, by vertue of our generall command of this Bay, as also the perticular subjectinge of the dead Sachims of Acquednecke and Kitackamuckquitt, themselves and land unto us, have sold unto Mr. Coddington and his friends united unto him, the great Island of Acquednecke lyinge from hence Eastward in this Bay, as also the marsh or grasse upon Quinunicutt and the rest of the Islands in the Bay (excepting Chibacuwesa (Prudence) formerly sould unto Mr. Winthrop, the now Governor of the Massachusetts and Mr. Williams of Providence; allso the grasse upon the rivers and coves about Kitickamuckquitt and from there to Paupausquatch, for the full payment of forty fathom of white beads, to be equally divided between us. In witness whereof we have here subscribed.

Item. That by giveinge Miantunnomus ten coates and twenty howes to the present inhabitants, they shall remove themselves from off the Island before next winter.

This deed was signed by the two sachems and witnessed by Roger Williams and Randall Holden.

A fathom of white beads varied in value, at different periods, from five to ten shillings. Forty fathoms of white beads were equal to between



## AQUIDNECK GRANT



two hundred and four hundred shillings, the equivalent in American coin of between fifty and one hundred dollars. We sometimes satisfy our consciences with the reflection that our ancestors paid the Indians for their lands, but there must be a slight misgiving when we consider the fact that all the islands in our bay save one, were bought and paid for at so small a cost. But then they paid all that the poor red man asked and the bargain was a fair one. How could they have paid more?

But there was still larger consideration, for Wanamatainememit, sachem of Aquidneck, acknowledges to five fathom of white wampum for his interest in the Islands. On the 6th of the fifth month (July) Massasoit freely consents and grants to "Mr. Coddington and his English friends united to him the use of any grasse or trees on ye maine land on Powakasick (Tiverton) side" for five fathom of wampum. On the 11th of May, 1639, "Mr. Coddington and his friends united" to pay to Miantonomi ten fathoms of beads, for his "paines and travell in removing the natives off of the Island of Aquidneck."

On the 22nd of November, 1639, Miantonomi received to Mr. Coddington and his friends united, twenty-three coats and thirteen hoes to distribute to the Indians that did inhabit Aquidneck "in full of all promises, debts and demands for the said Island, and also two tarkepes." These several payments in beads and other valuables constitute the full consideration for the Aquidneck purchase.

Under date of April 14, 1652, Mr. Coddington relates that before leaving Boston in 1638, there was an agreement of several persons to make purchase of some place to the southward for a Plantation, whither they resolved to remove and that "some of them were sent out to view a place for themselves and such others as they should take in to the libertie of freemen and purchasers with them. And upon their view was purchased Rhode Island, with some small neighboring islands and privileges of grasse and wood of the islands in the Bay and maine adjoyinge." At this date he delivers up the deeds of the purchases and the records to the proper authorities, holding in his own right and title only his own proportion.

On the 27th of September, 1677, Mr. Coddington enters on the public records that when he was one of the magistrates of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, "he was one of the persons that made a peace with Caunnonnicus and Mianantonomy in the Collony's behalfe of all the Narragansett Indians, and by order from the authoritie of the Massachusetts a little before they made war with the Pequod Indians."

Here then we have the combined statements of Dr. John Clarke, Roger Williams and William Coddington that a plan was formed in Boston for the establishment of a new Plantation to the southward; that eighteen persons assumed the business of selecting and purchasing

lands for the new Plantation; that through the acquaintance of Mr. Coddington, Mr. Williams and Sir Henry Vane with Canonicus and Miantonomi, chief sachems of the Narragansetts, Aquidneck and several other islands in Narragansett Bay were purchased for money and other valuable considerations and deeded to Mr. Coddington and his associates, in March, 1638, to the full and complete satisfaction of all parties concerned. Here we are assured that the Aquidneck lands, although purchased for what in our time seems a trifle, were not an "Indian steal" or "land grab," but an honest and an honorable transaction, from which no trouble ever arose afterward, either between the parties to the contract or between the Colonists as owners, either as to the validity of the land titles or the relative rights of the settlers who occupied the lands and paid their proportion for their individual estates. Too great emphasis cannot be laid upon the fact that the Aquidneck purchase was not a proprietary, held in the interests of a few or of one man, but was, at the outset, bought in fee simple by a group of persons and deeded in fee simple to the persons who became settlers within the towns and Colony established on the purchase,—warranty deeds being given and recorded within a short time after the original settlement was made at Pocasset, in 1638. Still more, this body of purchasers represented a great body of people or families, who, exercised in the doctrine of civil and soul freedom at Boston, had calmly and deliberately planned a new foundation, in accord with their united convictions, and for the accomplishment of these ends had bought a territory, on which to plant and develop institutions and homes, on the lines of a new civil, social and religious polity. We now find our Aquidneck Colonists dealing with realty in a manner which shows their high appreciation of the possession and full ownership of real estate, in accordance with the principles and under the forms of well established English laws. Socialism or community ownership of land was not regarded an essential element of Democracy. Individual ownership of real estate was the basis of the family fortune, transmitted from generation to generation. Its possession foreran the erection of houses and the cultivation of the fields. Among the first acts of the townspeople at Portsmouth was the assignment of lots and a public record of the location and owner. On the 20th of May, 1638, at Portsmouth, "it is ordered and agreed upon that every man's allotment recorded in this Book shall be his sufficient evidence for him and his, rightly to possess and enjoy."

Mr. John Coggeshall, Mr. John Sanford and Mr. John Porter were ordered to allot the lands to the owners. The price of land was fixed at two shillings per acre, "one-half presently, and the other half at the end of three months." Mr. John Clarke, Mr. Jeffries, John Porter and Richard Burden were ordered to "survey all the lands near abouts and



Aug 27, 1638

1638 weare nowe and tyme comly when we geve plenamys  
to god our propere spes cheare weare comly  
into his churche & geve plenamys with ful  
out our purclay hand and stately into our god  
wherewith he lay his hande upon us. And so all  
wee to all god's people & wch absolute lawes  
of god & god's people sett in the next daye lene late  
and come to us. Amen.

John Woodrington

John Sharpe

John Hutchinson

John Gossage

William Chapman

Samuel Willber

John Hart

John Sargent

Thomas Nutting Jr

Thomas Nutting Sr

John Hart

Matthew Sturdivant

John Chipps

John Waller

John Carter

William Bangs

Edward Hutchinson

John Bradfords

Randall Sturdivant

John Hart

John Waller

John Chipps

John Hart

John Waller

John Chipps

John Waller

THE PORTSMOUTH COMPACT

bring in a Mapp or Plott of all the said lands." In the year 1640, March 1, Nicholas Brown conveyed forty-five acres of land to John Wood by a warranty deed and about the same date Samuel Gorton conveyed to Philip Sherman, seven acres by the same title.

With fixed land values, attached to land records, civil society has a real basis of equitable taxation, without which to provide for the general needs of society no progress is possible along lines for civic betterment. Without taxable property, real and personal, upon which a just rate of assessment may be levied, no body of people can possess coherency or claim autonomy. Public service can be built on revenue only, and in order to ensure the proper ends of organized society, the subjects of a state must contribute as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities. Taxation is an essential to the social order and to civil government. The Aquidneck Colony recognized this intitular possession of estates, in record evidence and in the assessment of taxes to meet public needs. It is clearly manifest that in the undertaking of a new Plantation in New England, there was motive, forethought, experience in government, organization and resources in so large a measure of efficiency to establish the Primacy of the Aquidneck Colony in all matters pertaining thereto. The general reader, the political economist and the historian, will note that land estates, land records and taxation are chief corner stones in the foundation of a Democratic state.

#### THE PORTSMOUTH COMPACT.

Prior to leaving Boston, a compact was drawn up, under date of March 7, 1638, by which a number of the leading men of the proposed Colony incorporated themselves into "A Bodie Politik" to the end that they might go to their new Plantation in a formal organization, under a chosen leader or Governor. The compact is as follows:

The 7th Day of the First Month, 1638.

We whose names are underwritten do hereby solemnly in the presence of Jehovah incorporate ourselves into a Bodie Politick and as He shall help, will submit our persons, lives and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and to all those perfect and most absolute laws of His given in His Holy Word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby.

Exodus, 24c., 3:4.  
II Cron., 11c., 3.  
II Kings, 11:17.

William Coddington,  
John Clarke,  
William Hutchinson, Jr.,  
John Coggeshall,  
William Aspinwall,

William Dyre,  
William Freeborne,  
Philip Shearman,  
John Walker,  
Richard Carder.

Samuel Wilbore, John Porter, John Sanford, Edward Hutchinson, Jr., Esq., Thomas Savage,	William Baulston, Edward Hutchinson, Sr., Henry + Bull, Randall Holden.
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This compact was signed originally by twenty-three persons. The original paper is in the keeping of the Secretary of State, at the State House, Providence, a photograph of which appears on the opposite page. Four names,—Thomas Clarke, brother of John, John Johnson, William Hall and John Brightman, Esq.—follow the nineteen that appear above. Erasure marks have been made over these names, the reason for which it is not easy to understand as the first three were among the first recorded settlers of Newport, and Mr. Brightman may have been.

This compact holds the same relation to the Aquidneck Colony that the Declaration of the Pilgrim Fathers, made and signed in the cabin of the Mayflower, had to the Pilgrim State at Plymouth, Massachusetts. Neither was a Constitution nor a Bill of Rights for a Colony. Boston called the compact an act of incorporation. Plymouth called theirs a covenant. Boston did the act in "the presence of Jehovah," Plymouth wrote "in the presence of God." Boston formed a "Bodie Politick." Plymouth called theirs a "Civill Bodie Politick." Boston submitted their "persons, lives and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ." \* \* \* "And to all those perfect and most absolute lawes of His given us in His Holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby." Plymouth promised submission and obedience to such "just and equal lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices" as might be enacted, constituted and framed. Each compact had for its purpose the formation of a civil state under an orderly government. The Boston paper was probably written by Dr. John Clarke, whose piety and purpose lent a strongly religious sentiment to the document, so much so that some historians have called it theocratic. But Dr. Clarke did not classify The Christ as a theocrat, for all his writings make the great Teacher the interpreter of a new Democracy in which soul-liberty is established and enforced.

Samuel G. Arnold, our Rhode Island historian, has given a very clear and just interpretation of the Portsmouth Compact. He says, "So prominent indeed is the religious character of this instrument, that it has by some been considered, although erroneously, as being itself 'a church covenant, which also embodied a civil compact.' Their plans were more matured than those of the Providence settlers. To establish a Colony independent of every other was their avowed intention, and the organization of a regular government was their initial step. That their object was to lay the foundation of a Christian state, where all who bore the name might worship God according to the dictates of conscience, untram-

melded by written articles of faith, and unawed by the civil power, is proved by their declarations and by their subsequent conduct." \* \* \*

"The Aquidneck settlements for many years increased, more rapidly than those on the main land. The occasions appear to have been, for the most part, from a superior class in point of education and social standing, which for more than a century secured to them a controlling influence in the Colony. Many of the leading men were more imbued with the Puritan spirit, acquired by their longer residence in Massachusetts, which sympathized somewhat more with the law than with the liberty of the embryo state. It is foreshadowed in the compact and in a few years was realized in action. It had its advantages, however, and the chief of these were it enabled the people at once to organize a government and strengthened them to preserve it better than those of Providence, while it also was a means of securing and extending their influence over the other settlements, who looked up to them in many things, and received from them their first code of laws."

The Portsmouth Compact was of the nature of a municipal charter. It stated in very general terms its purpose,—the formation of a civil government,—"a Bodie Politick." It also declared, in the most emphatic words, that the state to be organized was to be one of just laws, founded on Christian principles, and administered by upright men in harmony with those purposes and principles. The policy of the civil life of the new state was to be made manifest in the powers conferred and possessed by the members, in the character of the men chosen for office and in the functions and operations of the community life. The general corporate powers include civil freedom with religious liberty. Will the new Commonwealth be true to its general declaration? If it is, it will become first among nations in the declaration and enforcement of the rights of universal freedom.

#### A DEMOCRATIC STATE IN THE MAKING.

The Portsmouth Compact, in its brief seventy words, involves several cardinal doctrines of a free state, the elucidation and illustration of which are made apparent in the development of the two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, as well as in their union as the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck.

The first of these doctrines is that of self-government, on which our several states and our Republic have been built. The founders of Portsmouth acknowledged no human authority as their superior. They submitted their "persons, lives and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ," and to Him alone. It is manifest that freedom,—personal, civil and spiritual, was bound up in the doctrine of self-government. The denial of religious liberty in a community of self-governing citizens, would be a contradic-

tion of rights and, it will appear, in all the subsequent history of the Aquidneck Colony, that there was never an instance of the abridgement of the liberties of the people in civil or soul concerns, except in restraint of criminal acts. So thorough was the Declaration of Independence imbedded in the minds of these Corporators that they ignored Colonial relations with the mother land, and, so far as our studies entitle us to an opinion, hereby constituted and ordained the first free state in the world, organized by a body of freemen, independent of church or Colonial obligations.

A second doctrine is this that the civil state is the instrument through and by which self-government shall be secured and assured. The Portsmouth people, in the establishment of the first doctrine, must incorporate themselves "into a Bodie Politick" for the very end and purpose of maintaining self-government. A community, unincorporated, is a heap of sand, blown about by every wind of doctrine, a rope of sand with no bonds to hold it together. The entity of a state rests on the indissoluble bonds of social and civic unity, expressed in legal form and enduring principles.

A third doctrine of immense value is the legitimacy and supremacy of law and the necessity of the civil magistrate as the right arm of the civil state for the enforcement of law and the protection of society. The Portsmouth Compact idealizes common law and the ancient English codes, after the style of the Hebrew lawgivers, by the expression of hyperbole, "Those perfect and most absolute laws of His given us in His Holy Word of Truth, to be judged and guided thereby." There is no doubt of the sincerity and honesty of the declaration and we can but admire the noble self-consecration of this new state—the purpose of the human to approximate toward the Divine. "Not failure but low aim is crime." That self government, civil and religious freedom, obedience to law and full submission to magistracy were the basic supports of the Portsmouth Compact and the Rhode Island Colony, we have but to refer to the letter of Dr. John Clarke, agent of the Colony of Rhode Island, to Charles the Second in 1662. Rhode Island Colonial Records, Vol I, pp. 485, et seq.: "Your petitioners were necessitated long since for cause of conscience, with respect to the worship and service of God to take up a resolution to quit their deare and native country and all their near and precious relations and enjoyments therein, and to expose themselves and their families to all the hazards and inconveniences which they might meete upon the vast and swelling ocean over which they should pass, or in the barbarous and howling wilderness to which they might come." \* \* \* "Where for the aforesaid causes of conscience and for peace sake they were also necessitated to travail further among the barbarians in places untrod and with no small hazard to seek out a place of habita-

tion (Aquadneck), where, according to what was propounded in your petitioners first adventure, they might with freedome of conscience worship the Lord their God as they were persuaded."

Dr. Clarke tells the King that his Pilgrim band was guided by the Most High "to steere their course into the thickest of the most potent provinces and people of all that country. \* \* \* Your petitioners found them free to admiration, not only to part with the choicest partes of their territoryes (Aquadneck and other islands) being no wayes inferiour, for commodious harbours in all respects to any parts of the country, but also to quitt their native, auncient and very advantageous stations and dwellings thereon, to make roome for them." The above paragraphs from Dr. Clarke's long letter refer to the purchase of Aquadneck and other islands from Canonicus and Miantonomi by Mr. Coddington and his associates, March 24, 1638.

The next paragraph of the letter sets forth to King Charles most important facts as to the motive of the founding of the Colony of Rhode Island (Aquadneck), the establishment of a corporate government and the adoption of the English code of laws and magistracy, "so far forth as the nature and constitution of the place and the professed cause of their conscience would permit."

Dr. Clarke closes his letter with an earnest appeal for a new charter, "whereby under the wing of your Royall protection, we may not only be sheltered, but caused to flourish in our civill and religious concernments in these remote parts of the world."

In a second address to the King for "a charter of civill corporation" Dr. Clarke, after further reference to "the wonderful passage of the Providence of the Most High," writes, "Your petitioners have it much on their hearts (if they may be permitted) to hold forth a livelie experiment that a flourishing Civill State may stand, yea, and best be maintained, and that among English spirits, with a full liberty in religious concernments, and that true pyety rightly grounded upon gospell principles will give the best and greatest security to true sovereignty, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to truer loyalty." If the Portsmouth Compact of 1638 needed any commentary, nothing could be more complete and satisfactory than the historic setting of the instrument and the exact definition of its terms, purposes and meaning as given by its author, in his successful argument for a Royal Charter.

As already stated the Portsmouth Compact was probably written and signed at Boston, under date of March 7, 1638. As it inaugurated for America and the world the principle of self-government or popular sovereignty, it did not ask or require any municipal, state or court sanction. It was the free act of the sovereign people themselves, exercising the rights, natural and inalienable, to life, liberty and happiness. Jehovah

was invoked as a witness to this great transaction, unique, singular, the first of its nature in the records of men. Had we naught else than this remarkable act of nineteen men at Boston (or a probable twenty-three), the Primacy of Portsmouth as an absolutely free municipality would be established, but we are only at the starting point of a series of events which establish our claim beyond peradventure.

Under date of the Compact appears the election of the executive of the sovereign state, with the title of Judge. The record is as follows:

FIRST ELECTION BY FREEMEN.

The 7th of the first month, 1638.

We that are Freemen Incorporate of this Bodie Politick do Elect and Constitute William Coddington, Esquire, a Judge amongst us, and do covenant to yield all due honour unto him according to the lawes of God, and so far as in us lyes to maintaine the honour and privileges of his place which shall hereafter be ratified according unto God, the Lord helping us so to do.

William Aspinwall, Sec'y.

OATH OF OFFICE.

I, William Coddington, Esquire, being called and chosen by the Freemen Incorporate of this Bodie Politick to be a Judge amongst them, do covenant to do Justice and Judgment impartially according to the lawes of God, and to maintaine the Fundamentall Rights and Privileges of this Bodie Politick, which shall hereafter be ratified according unto God, the Lord helping us so to do.

Wm. Coddington.

William Aspinwall is appointed Secretary.

It is agreed that William Dyre shall be Clarke of this Body.

As the claim is sometimes made that Connecticut was the first of the American Colonies to adopt Democratic ideals in civil affairs, it is well to state essential differences and agreements as to that plantation and Aquidneck. A provincial government was instituted, under a Commission from the General Court of Massachusetts (March 8, 1635), to eight of the persons who "had resolved to transplant themselves and their estates unto the River Connecticut." \* \* \* "that Commission taking rise from the desire of the people that removed, who judged it inconvenient to go away without any form of government." In 1636, March 3rd, Roger Ludlowe, Esq. and seven others were made a Board of Commissioners "with full power and authoritie" "for the peaceable and quiett ordering the affaires of the said plantacion," Connecticut. In later legislation, Massachusetts Bay Colony claimed the territory of Connecticut as a Province lying within its Patent and subject to its control.

Concerning the Coddington purchase of Aquidneck and other islands in Narragansett Bay, no claims of ownership or Patent rights were ever made by any Colony and the Indian quit-claim was never disputed as a

fair title. The first voluntary Compact of the Connecticut towns, Windsor, Hartford and Wethersfield, was entered into Jan. 14, 1639, "as one Publike State or Commonwealth," to "enter into combination and confederation together, to mayntayne and presearve the liberty and purity of the gospell of our Lord Jesus whch we now professe, as also the discipline of the churches, which according to the truth of the said gospell is now practised amongst us; As also in civill affaires to be guided and governed according to such Lawes, Rules, Orders and Decrees as shall be made," etc.

Eleven decrees of the convention of the three towns constitute "the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut," which Bancroft and other historians denominate the first foundations of our American Constitution. As to this claim, Channing states correctly that this "celebrated Constitution did little more than to formulate on paper the existing government of Massachusetts Bay." It agrees with the Aquidneck Declaration in the recognition of "Almighty God" as the Wise Disposer of His Divine Providence, and the Word of God as the source of both human and Divine Law. Both communities ordain officers of the same rank and a legislative body with equal powers and privileges.

In other matters the differences are important and vital. Connecticut makes the civil state primarily the sponsor of "the liberty and purity of the Gospell of our Lord Jesus." Still more it makes "the discipline of the churches" a part of the duty of the state. This feature unites Church and State in one and constitutes a church-state and a state-church—in no sense unlike the Puritan church-state of the Bay Colony.

In the Connecticut "orders," the General Court is made the supreme power of the Commonwealth, thereby transferring the supremacy of the people to a body chosen by and a creature of the people. The General Court, consisting of six elective persons beside the Governor, constituted the Colonial Judiciary to administer justice according to the laws. This plan of uniting the legislative, judicial and executive functions in one body may have been, as in the Bay Colony, a matter of economy in administration, but absolutely undemocratic and unwise in principle. It is difficult to understand how clear minded historians can find the elements of a free republic under such a system. The more certain is this conclusion when we state that there is no Bill of Rights as to civil or religious liberties and the peculiar qualification of the Governor that he must be a member of the Congregational Body,—the established church of the Colony. It is an interesting and most important bit of evidence as to the much vaunted civil government of Connecticut, that in the charter of 1662, granted by Charles, the people "shall have and enjoy all Liberties and Immunities of free and natural Subjects \* \* \* as if they and every one of them were born within the realm of England." This charter concluded all previous Colonial rights and privileges and reduced the

people to the level of their brethren across the sea. Whatever of special republicanism belonged to the Hartford Colony by the "Orders" of 1635, was abolished twenty-seven years later by the Crown.

In contradistinction to the civil polity of Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay Colonies, the Aquidneck Colony affirms absolute freedom in civil and religious concerns, establishes no religious tests for office, protects all religious faiths while patronizing none, establishes a distinct judiciary, and affirms and practises the principles of majority-rule in a Democratic state.

The Colony of New Haven, the original constitution of which was adopted June 4, 1639, was more distinctly a church-state community than was Massachusetts Bay, and no claim has ever been made as to its exercise in "Democracie." As all the New England Colonies, except Rhode Island (Aquidneck),—Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Hartford and New Haven,—in addition to other limitations on personal freedom, not only suspended the operation of all just laws as to the Quakers, but both approved of and practised persecution of this sect in one form or another, we shall dismiss them as claimants in founding a state with religious freedom as a cardinal doctrine, limiting our later contention to the claims made in behalf of Roger Williams and the Providence Plantations.

Dr. Clarke tells us that a portion of the Boston party came by vessel, "passing about a large and dangerous Cape" (Cape Cod). The time was March, 1638. The day of sailing from Boston is not known, nor is the date of arrival in Narragansett Bay. Dr. Clarke and some others followed the Indian trail through the forests, coming to Providence to consult with Roger Williams as to their location. The story of the purchase of Aquidneck has been told, and, when the overland and seagoing people meet, it is on the Island of Aquidneck, their future home. It is probable that the vessel entered the Sakonnet River and that emigrants came to land with their household goods on the northeast part of the Island of Aquidneck, in a section known by the Indian name Pocasset. The site of the original settlement was at the head of the Cove, north of the village of Newtown, and is easily located by ancient landmarks. The first general meeting of record of the new settlers from Boston was held on the 13th day of May, 1638, at which were present Messrs. William Coddington, William Hutchinson, John Coggeshall, Edward Hutchinson, William Baulston, John Clarke, John Porter, Samuel Wilbore, John Sanford, William Freeborne, Philip Sherman, John Walker and Randall Holden. At this meeting several orders were adopted as follows:

1. None shall be received as inhabitants or freemen to build or plant upon the Island but such as shall be received in by the consent of the Bodye, and do submit to the Government that is or shall be established, according to the word of God.

2. The Town shall be built at the Springe and Mr. William Hutchinson is permitted to have six lots for himself and his children, layed out at the Great Cove.

3. An order for a five-rayle fence from Bay to Bay, the charge to be borne proportional to allotments of land was made and repealed.

4. An order that every person should have one acre of Meadow for a beast, one acre for a sheep and one acre and a half for a horse was made and repealed.

5. Every inhabitant of this Island shall be always provided of one muskett, one pound of powder, twenty bulletts, and two fathom of match, with Sword and rest and Bandeliers, all completely furnished.

6. That the Meeting House shall be set on the neck of land that goes to the Maine of the Island where Mr. John Coggeshall and Mr. John Sanford shall lay it out.

During the year 1638-9 thirteen public town meetings were held for the transaction of public business. The records show allotments of lands to the inhabitants, with a record of each man's estate in the book of land records; May 4, 1638, William Baulston was given consent "to erect and sett up a howese of entertainment for strangers, and also to brew beare and to sell wines and strong waters and such necessary provisions as may be usefull in any kind." June 4, 1638, William Baulston and Edward Hutchinson are chosen sergeants of the Train Bands, Samuel Wilbore clerk, and Randall Holden and Henry Bull corporals.

The lands of the Island are rated at two shillings per acre, one half to be paid "presently" and the other half in three months from date of purchase.

Mr. William Hutchinson and Mr. John Coggeshall were chosen Treasurers for the Company, to receive and disburse money, as ordered.

Mr. Sanford and four others are ordered to repair the highways between Aquidneck and Titicut, to be paid out of the treasury.

Any freeman absenting himself from the town meeting "to treate upon the Public affaires of the Body, upon publicle warning (whether by beate of the drum or otherwise), failing one-quarter of an hour after the second sound shall forfeit twelve pence, or if any one departs without leave, the same sum."

Aug. 20, 1638. A pair of stockes with a whipping post was ordered to be made, to be paid for out of the treasury.

Richard Dummer, Nicholas Easton, William Brenton and Robert Harding were admitted freemen.

Aug. 23, 1638. A house for a prison was ordered, twelve feet long, two feet broad, ten foot studding, of sufficient strength and the cost to be paid out of the treasury. Mr. William Brenton was the builder.

Mr. Richard Dummer, for building a mill, useful to the plantation, was granted an allotment of land equal to an estate of £150.

Randall Holden was chosen town marshall "for one whole year."

Sept. 15, 1638. Eight persons were arraigned "for a riott of drunkenness." Two were sentenced to pay 5s. apiece and "to sett till the evening in the stockes;" one to pay 5s. and "sett one houre in the stockes" and four were fined 5s. each for default.

A committee was chosen to view damages done upon corn and other fruits.

Nov. 5, 1638. The 12th of November was set apart as "a general day of Trayning for the Exercise of those who are able to beare armes in the arte of military discipline," for males between 16 and 50 years of age. Three- and six-acre house lots were laid out by Mr. Sanford and Mr. Jeffries.

It was ordered that Mr. Edward Hutchinson shall bake bread for the use of the plantation, and that his bread for the assize shall be ordered by that body.

Nov. 16, 1638. Mr. Nicholas Easton was granted an extra allotment of land for settling up a water mill "for the necessary use and good of the plantation."

John Lutner, a carpenter, having left the Island without paying his debts, Messrs. Brenton and Coggeshall were ordered to seize his house and furniture to pay his debts, after appraisal of his property.

Messrs. Coggeshall, Hutchinson, Wilbore and Dyer are chosen as a committee to buy venison of the Indians for three half-pence a pound, and these truck-masters are ordered to sell the meat at two pence per pound, a farthing to be paid into the Treasury, and the rest to the committee for their services.

Jan. 2, 1638-9. At this meeting it was decided to choose three Elders "to assist the Judge in the execution of Justice and Judgment for the regulating and ordering of all offences and offenders; and for the drawing up and determining of all such Rules and Laws as shall be according to God, which may conduce to the Good and Welfare of the community." The Judge and the Elders were made accountable to the Body of Free-men, once every quarter of the year, for all "cases, actions and rules" which they have acted on, which could then be vetoed or repealed by that Body.

At the first election Mr. Nicholas Easton, Mr. John Coggeshall and Mr. William Brenton were chosen Elders as Assistants to Judge William Coddington.

Mr. John Clarke, Mr. Jeffries, John Porter and Richard Barden were chosen to "survey all the lands near abouts and bring in a Mapp or Platt of all the said lands and so to make Report to the Judge and Elders, whereby they may receive information and direction for the distribution to each man his property."

The Judge and Elders were instructed to deal with William Aspinwall concerning defaults, "as also concerning Invasions forreine an domestick as also the determination of Military discipline, and the disposing of lands as well as the howse lotts and impropriations."

Jan. 11, 1638-9. "The Body being assembled with the Judge and Elders it was agreed (as necessary) for the Commonwealth, that a Constable and Sergeant should be chosen by the Body to execute the Lawes and penalties thereof." There follows in the records a statement of the duties of each officer.

Samuel Wilbore was chosen Constable and Henry Bull Sergeant and both were "invested with the authority aforesayd and what else shall be found meet to concure with the office."

It was voted that the prison be set near to or adjoining the house of Henry Bull, the Sergeant.

April 30, 1639. It was ordered that a Court be held every quarter, "to doe right betwixt man and man," by a jury of twelve men, "also to put an end to any Controversy, if it amount not to the value of fortie shillings."

On the same day, the Freemen of Pocasset acknowledged themselves "the legall subjects of his Majestie King Charles" and in his name bound themselves "into a civill body politique, unto his lawes according to matters of justice." At the same meeting, a Judge was elected "by the major voice."

Farms for grain were laid out, ranging in size from thirty to four hundred acres.

On March 1, 1640, the first warranty deed appears of forty-five acres of land from Nicholas Brown to John Wood.

We have been thus particular in noting the principal events of record as to the founding of Portsmouth and the town proceedings of the first year, for the purpose of showing the orderly procedure of the settlers of the new town of Aquidneck, called at first by the Indian name Pocasset. We see before our own eyes a town in the making. The several acts are so natural, so regular and so well matured that they seem, as they really are, the product of a long experience in civic building. By the records or between the lines we read of no personal differences, disputes or divisions. Their public deeds are so unanimous that they seem as the deed of a single person. The common weal augurs the founding of a strong Commonwealth. Each member renders essential aid in the perfect jointure of all the parts. There are no quarrels or fights over lands, or titles, or offices, or Covenants of Works or Grace. Pocasset is a family of families so far as all living evidence can be produced. A site is chosen for the town, near the Great Cove. Home lots of six acres are at once laid out, houses are built, gardens and fields planted, lands are surveyed,

platted and allotted for farms, town officers are elected, a town treasury established, public money is provided for by sale of lands, fences are built, cattle, horses and sheep are secured, family and neighborhood protection is assured by the provision for fire arms, a Meeting House is ordered built, a town common laid out, a house of entertainment or tavern is agreed upon, where "beare" may be brewed and wines and other "strong waters" bought and sold, Train Bands are organized, officers chosen and training days established, highways are laid out and highway surveyors chosen, their labor to be paid out of the town treasury, town meetings often bi-monthly are called by the "beate of the Drumm," and a shilling fine levied on a late comer, town stocks and a whipping post were built with treasury money and in less than a month three men, arrested and found guilty "for a Riott of Drunkenness," were paying a portion of the judicial penalty with their arms and legs pinioned between the oak beams. The erection of a prison, though small in its dimensions, is proof of the purpose to shut up sturdy offenders in law breaking, and the choice of Henry Bull as town sergeant was an absolute guaranty that culprits would serve out their terms of commitment. With Samuel Wilbore as Constable, "to inform in Generall of all manifest breaches of the Law of God, that tend to civill disturbance" and with Judge William Coddington and his associates on the bench "for the regulating and ordering of all offences and offenders," it is absolutely certain that the "Magistracy" was not a by-word nor a hissing at Pocasset, in 1638.

To provide good corn meal, the chief ingredient of the renowned "Rhode Island Johnny Cake," two mills are provided, a wind and a water, and a land bounty falls to the owners. To provide venison, truck masters are chosen, who are authorized to pay three cents a pound to the Indians, to be sold at four cents, dividing the one penny between themselves and the town treasury. To provide good bread, corn and rye, Mr. Edward Hutchinson was chosen town baker. Here then, on the Island of Aquidneck in Narragansett Bay, at Pocasset, was founded, in the year 1638, an American town on new lines. The founders were well-to-do, intelligent families of English birth. While in England, they belonged to the liberal Puritan element. They left England that they might enjoy the largest liberty as to their religious beliefs, consistent with the doctrines of a civil state of the Democratic type. Coming to Boston between the years 1630 and 1638, they had experienced all the trials and dangers of a pioneer life, in which a severe climate, a wilderness land, and tribes of barbarous men were their chief welcome. Here they had had their first experience in the practical affairs of founding a town, in which most of the men and women were among the chief actors. Coddington, Coggeshall, the Hutchinsons, Aspinwall, Savage, Brenton and others had been elected and filled with honor, for successive years, offices

of honor, trust and service. Most of them had been members of the First Church of Boston and two were deacons, at the time of discipline.

In the year 1634, a new thought, born in the breast of a bright-minded English woman, Anne Hutchinson, is announced and taught in Boston and is accepted as truth by the majority of the people of the town. That thought embraced in its unfolding all the more modern concepts of a free spiritual faith in a free state. To our minds, it was involved in terms often ambiguous and perplexing, but it was so real in that day that its free discussion and long acceptance threatened the existence of the Puritan church and Colony. We have already, in another chapter, related the incident and its outcome. Church discipline, social and official ostracism, and civil disbarment and banishment follow in quick succession, and a whole township of people,—men, women, children, babes in arms,—was forced to part with homes, built and comfortably furnished, leaving lands, businesses and other property interests practically confiscated and abandoned, for a second sea voyage to erect a new Plantation, in the Narragansett Country,—a *terra incognita* to these Pilgrims of a new civil polity and spiritual vision. United as they have been at Boston, in social, civil and church relations, in doctrinal accord in matters of soul freedom, these people are bound as with bands of steel in one purpose to erect a "Body Politick," of a new pattern, the primacy of which must challenge the judgment of men.

#### THE FOUNDING OF NEWPORT.

At Pocasset, on the 28th day of April, 1639, the following agreement was made by a portion of the founders of that community:

#### AGREEMENT.

It is agreed by us whose hands are underwritten, to propagate a Plantation in the midst of the Island or elsewhere; And doe engage ourselves to bear equall charges, answerable to our strength and estates in common; and that our determination shall be by major voice of Judges and Elders; the Judge to have a double voice.

#### PRESENT.

William Coddington, <i>Judge,</i>	John Clarke,
Nicholas Easton,	Jeremy Clarke,
John Coggeshall,	Thomas Hazard,
William Brenton,	Henry Bull,
William Dyre, <i>Ct<sup>k</sup>.</i>	

Several important reasons led to the separation of the first settlers of Pocasset and the founding of a new town at the South end of Aquidneck. The first was the influx of a large number of families from Boston to the Pocasset settlement. In addition to those who were banished or ostracised, leaving the Bay Colony by compulsion, many of Anne Hutch-

inson's associates in the school of freedom followed her to and made homes on the Island. Boston's great loss was Pocasset's great gain. It is estimated that one hundred families came to the new town in the first year, 1638, thereby forming a large body of claimants for land, extending their homesteads over a large section of the north end of the Island.

A second reason lay in the fact that the first settlement was made in great haste, after the purchase of Aquidneck. The purchase was made while the main body of the people were sailing on an undetermined voyage from Boston to Narragansett Bay and the first town was located on Sakonnet River, near their landing place. No survey had been made of the Island and the first eligible location invited occupation. During the year 1638 the whole area had been visited and a portion of the company saw, in the commodious, land-locked waters of the lower Narragansett, a future harbor for shipping, trade and commerce, and in the surrounding lands, fertile soils and commanding sites for residences. The names of Easton, Brenton and Clarke, the earliest residents, survive in local geographical usage, in and about the city of Newport.

It does not appear that any denominational differences had arisen, nor do the records show any but the most cordial relations existing among the settlers of the Island before and after the formation of the new town, Newport. It is well known, however, that Dr. John Clarke was an ordained non-comformist minister, and that in the year 1644, the First Baptist Church was organized at Newport, with Dr. Clarke as its minister. It is a matter of more than passing note that Dr. Clarke conducted public worship for both the Congregational and other elements on Aquidneck from 1638 to 1644, with the interval of a few months, when Mr. Robert Lenthal taught a public school at Newport and conducted religious services at the Newport Congregational meeting house. As a meeting house was built at Portsmouth for public worship in 1638, Rev. John Callender in his "Century Sermon" wrote, "there is no reason to think that persons of their zeal (Portsmouth and Newport) should immediately fall into a total neglect of a social worship." As the Baptists were a despised and persecuted sect in England and in Massachusetts Bay Colony, we have here a fine illustration of the Catholic, tolerant spirit of the Aquidneck founders, not only in following Dr. John Clarke in civil leadership, but in adopting him and his teachings in spiritual leadership. It was no ordinary Puritan congregation to which Dr. Clarke ministered, for, at the double Sunday services, there sat in the pews, William Coddington, Judge, Anne Hutchinson, reformer, Deacons Coggeshall and Aspinwall, the Brentons, Bulls, Eastons, and, not least, his own brothers, Joseph and Thomas Clarke, who joined him in organizing a Baptist church at Newport. Here certainly was Simon-pure religious freedom,

in a community taught at Boston by the broad-minded, liberal Anne Hutchinson.

At the meeting of the town's people it was agreed that the Plantation should be called Newport and should extend towards Pocasset for the space of five miles, and Mr. John Clarke, Mr. Jeffreys, Thos. Hazard and William Dyer were chosen to lay out the lands and highways, allowing to each family a home lot of four acres. Trade with the Indians was made free for all people. Mr. Robert Jeffries was chosen town treasurer. The Secretary, Mr. Dyer, was paid £19 and ten acres of land for services. It was agreed that in the Quarter Courts, the determination of matters was by majority vote, the Judge having two votes.

On the 25th of December, 1639, the town affirmed its allegiance to King Charles, "as Natural subjects to our Prince, and subject to his Lawes, all matters that concern the Peace shall be by those that are officers of the Peace, transacted; and all actions of the case or Dept shall be in such Courts as by order are here appointed, and by such Judges are Deputed."

Mr. Jeremy Clarke was chosen Constable for one year. Mr. William Foster was chosen "Clerke of the Traine Band" and was ordered to report on the condition of the Arms. Robert Jeffries was chosen as drill master of the Military Company. It was ordered "that noe man shall go two miles from the Towne unarmed, eyther with Gunn or Sword, and that none shall come to any public meeting without his weapon. Upon default of eyther he shall forfeit five shillings." Commissioners were chosen to negotiate business with Pocasset. At the same meeting (1639), Mr. Easton and John Clarke were instructed to inform Mr. Vane (Harry) by writing, of the state of things here "and desire him to treat about the obtaining a Patent of the Island from his Majestie, and likewise to write to Mr. Thomas Burrwood, brother to Mr. Easton, concerning the same thing."

On the 3rd of December, 1639, John Bartlett and John Hadson were fined five shillings each for "the Breach of the Peace, by their excess in drinking." A fortnight later, Mr. Easton was fined five shillings for "coming to the public meeting without his weapon." At this meeting orders were issued as to building post and rail fences, the restraint of hogs, provision for bulls,—one for every twenty cows, keepers for herds of cattle, and the firing of lands after March the first. The Treasurer was ordered to "provide forthwith a pair of Stocks and a whipping post to be sett in some place as he shall have order for, in ye town of Niewport."

We have seen that Boston was the seat of the school of a liberal Democracy and of tolerance in religious concerns. We have also seen a

colony of families forced to separate from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, on account of their decided convictions as to civil and religious freedom, in opposition to a Puritan theocracy. Assured in conscience, united by a persistent and in a measure, a subtle persecution for conscience's sake in spiritual things, this large body of people consult, plan, decide, act. Led in their exodus by Dr. John Clarke, ably seconded by William Coddington, Anne Hutchinson, and other very competent and experienced persons, Aquidneck was purchased, a civil compact of incorporation was drawn and signed at Boston, and a vessel load of emigrants with their personal belongings sail from Boston, for an unknown port, leaving homes, lands, businesses behind them,—in their search for the land of their day-dreams,—a land of absolute freedom. The sacrifice was great, but their vision of a land of Freedom restrained their tears and silenced heart throbings. This was the initial act in founding the Commonwealth of Rhode Island on Aquidneck, in 1638.

The second act appears in the settlement and organization of the two towns, Portsmouth, 1638, and Newport in 1639, by this English Massachusetts Bay Colony company. The records of the planting of these towns occupy eighty-four pages of the first volume of the Rhode Island Colonial Records,—pages 45-128, inclusive, to which reference is made and the contents are entered as an essential factor of my argument. In the preface will be found an outline of the fundamentals of a sovereign state,—of such importance as to command a reading. This outline combines a body of men and women, in general agreement in faith and polity, with an intelligent understanding of the relations of the individual to civil society. A charter or compact is adopted embracing the basic principles of the inchoate state, with conditions and limitations as to freemanship and all the institutions, functions and officials for the establishment of orderly government. It is of the utmost import that rules and laws be established for protecting the rights of life, liberty, property and reputation, and the choice and installation of all officials for the safeguarding by whole people and the execution of the laws adopted by the body politic. Reviewing the records of the two towns, Portsmouth, 1638, and Newport, 1639, we find,

*First*, A large body of people of Boston and other towns in The Bay Colony, in the years 1637 and 8, made plans to found a new Plantation and sent out scouts, North and South, for a satisfactory location for settlement.

*Second*, All were in accord as to matters of religious faith and civil polity, holding to absolute freedom in spiritual concerns, within the bonds of a Democratic state.

*Third*, A civil Compact was formed at Boston under date of March

7, 1638, as the basis of law and order in the Commonwealth to be established, wherein the teachings of Jesus had full recognition.

*Fourth.* The gravity of the transaction appears in the breaking up of newly established homes and of business, the severance of social and church ties and the second endeavor of many families, moved by a common motive, to found homes and civil society in accord with their ideas and consciences as to Liberty.

*Fifth.* Aquidneck and other Islands in Narragansett Bay were purchased for the future home of the Colonists from The Bay Colony, under date of March 24, 1638.

*Sixth.* The body of emigrants took ship at Boston, voyaged to Aquidneck, landed in the neighborhood of the shores of Mount Hope Bay, and located their first town, called Pocasset, the Indian name of the place, in the Northeastern part of their Island purchase, in 1638.

*Seventh.* A year later, April 28, 1639, a second town, called Newport, was established at the South end of the Island Aquidneck, by the same body essentially that found Pocasset, the year previous.

*Eighth.* Both towns established practically the same body of laws and were both, as civil bodies, at first, under the guidance of a Judge elected by a majority vote, and later under an added magistracy of three Elders or Aldermen, constituting a Justice's Court as well as a legislative body, for each town.

*Ninth.* Lands were allotted to the amount of six acres for home lots and farm outlands, according to the needs and financial ability of the purchaser, at a uniform price of two shillings an acre.

*Tenth.* Town officers were elected by majority vote of the Freemen and consisted of a Judge, three Elders or Aldermen, a Clerk, a Treasurer, a Surveyor, a Constable, a Sergeant, Surveyors of Highways, a Plantation Baker, and several committees for specific ends.

*Eleventh.* Among the institutions established by each town, the first year, were a Meeting House, a prison, stocks and whipping posts, a Court of Justice, pounds for cattle, wind and water mills, taxation and a town treasury, the issuance and records of deeds and land titles, a military train or band regularly officered, training days, public houses for entertainment of man and beast, a ferry established to the main land, arms and ammunition provided for family and general defence, a nightly town watch, provisions for the poor, and in the year 1640, the town of Newport set up a public school, set apart lands for school purposes and chose Mr. Robert Lenthal as the first public school teacher of the town.

*Twelfth.* Town meetings were held regularly at which all public affairs were considered and decided by the major vote, lateness in attendance or absence being punishable by a fine. The town council as it may

be termed, acted in the absence of instructions, but its acts could be negatived by vote of the Freemen. Courts of Justice were held quarterly or as cases might demand consideration. Magistracy was held in high repute and fines and other punishments administered irrespective of rank of the offender. Town governments thus established, at the outset, by people, who, both in England and at Boston and other Bay Colony towns had been accustomed to orderly administration of civic affairs, continued in establishing order, systematic procedure, and a high standard of public service.

But what is most significant is the absolute fact that all this inauguration of government, laws, institutions, legal processes, public taxation, etc., etc., in a wilderness land, under strangely new conditions, was accomplished with but few hindrances, and so far as the records show, with a remarkably unanimity and large consideration for the public weal.

Another fact stands high above all others. It is this,—no person within the compass of the two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, later the Colony of Rhode Island, was ever called to a Court of Inquisition for his religious belief or practise and no person was ever deprived of his liberty and civic freedom in opinion and action, except for crime.



## CHAPTER XVII

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THE FOUNDING OF THE COLONY OF RHODE  
ISLAND ON AQUIDNECK







OLD MILL AT PORTSMOUTH



ROWLAND ROBINSON HOUSE, NORTH KINGSTON

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE FOUNDING OF THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND ON AQUIDNECK.

The history of the first year of the towns of Portsmouth and Newport shows that the founders were men of thought and action, united in purpose and pursuing it vigorously, courageously. The Island of Aquidneck was a land of forests. The first houses were built of the live timber, oak, pine, maple, growing on the lands of the planters. The breaking of the virgin soil by mattock and spade was no holiday affair, for an acre of ground must be cultivated to support each member of the family. Deer, bears, foxes, wolves inhabited the forests of the Island and Main. Clams and fish abounded and these fish and meat supplies with beans, corn and rye bread and Rhode Island Johnny cakes constituted the food of the founders. Little wonder that they were healthy and well filled with ambition and energy for their great, masterly undertaking,—the building a Free Commonwealth.

It is worthy of note that both towns were founded by the same persons, thereby ensuring the construction of the same town organization and preserving mutual friendship and coherency. One looks in vain for evidence of disorder, quarrels, local or town dissensions. Differences in opinion and action are the best proofs of a healthy individualism, and such differences undoubtedly existed, or the society could not have been human. It may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the settlers of Aquidneck were freer from disturbing agencies than any other American Colony or settlement. The next step in advance of a well regulated town government was the foundation of a state by the union of the two towns, under one general government. It has been noted that "the Body Politicke in the Ile of Aquethnec, inhabiting," on the 25th of November, 1639, did instruct Mr. Easton and Mr. John Clarke to write to Sir Harry Vane, their former associate and sympathetic friend in Boston, to treat with King Charles for "obtaining a Patent of the Island from his Majestie."

Four months later, on the 12th of March, 1640, at the general election in the town of Newport, a delegation from the town of Pocasset, consisting of Mr. William Hutchinson, Mr. William Baulston, Mr. John Sanford, John Porter, Adam Mott, William Freeborne, John Walker, Philip Sherman, Richard Carder and Randall Holden, presented themselves, and, in behalf of the town of Pocasset, asked to be "reunited" to the Newport government, and the clerk of the town of Newport records

the fact, "are readily embraced by us." By this simple act of affirmation a colony was formed, the first among men "holding forth a lively experiment that a flourishing civil state may stand, yea, and best be maintained, and that among English spirits, with a full liberty in religious concerns." On the 12th day of March, 1640, the two towns united at Newport, by unanimous agreement, to form the Colony which, later, assumed the name of the Island, Rhode Island, thereby assuring the Primacy of Rhode Island on Aquidneck as a Democratic state.

The legislation, accompanying this great act of new sovereignty was as follows: "It is ordered that the Chiefe Magistrate of the Island shall be called Governour, and the next Deputie Governour, and the rest of the Magistrates Assistants, and this to stand for a decree." "It is agreed, that the Governor and two Assistants shall be chosen in one town, and the Deputy Governour and two other Assistants in the other town." "It is ordered that the plantation at the other end of the Island shall be called Portsmouth."

The following officers of the new state were then elected:

Governor, Mr. William Coddington.

Deputy Governor, Mr. William Brenton.

Assistants,

Mr. Nicholas Easton,

Mr. John Coggeshall,

Mr. William Hutchinson,

Mr. John Porter.

Treasurers,

Mr. Robert Jeffreys,

Mr. William Baulston.

Secretary, William Dyer.

Constable for Newport, Mr. Jeremy Clarke.

Constable for Portsmouth, Mr. John Sanford.

Sergeant, Henry Bull.

It was ordered that the Governor and Assistants be invested with the powers and offices of Justice of the Peace.

It was ordered that five men be chosen to lay out the lands belonging to the town of Portsmouth and five for Newport.

By a majority vote of each town, the Freemen were authorized to select certain men to allot the public lands to settlers, and when laid out to record the same at the General Court.

At the General Court of the two towns, held on May 6th, 1640, at Newport, it was enacted as a war measure, "that in each Plantation there bee this forme dulie observed; that as soone as notice is given of any probable incursion, that then forthwith Three Muskets be distinctly dis-

charged and the Drum or Drummes incessantly to beat an Alarum; and that forthwith each Man bearing armes shall repair to the coulers (colors), which shall be lodged at ye Chief Magistrates Howse in each Plantation, as he will answer at his perill." As is well known, the danger of hostile acts was feared from the Indians and from the Dutch, then occupying Manhattan.

It was also ordered, that the "Particular Courts, consisting of Magistrates and Jurors shall be holden on the first Tuesday of each month; and one Courte to be held at Newport, the other at Portsmouth; and the sayd Court shall have full powre to judge and determine all such cases and actions as shall be presented."

As students of civil government lay great stress upon the judicial functions of a state it is well to say that, at the outset of the Aquidneck planting, a Judge was the Chief Magistrate, fulfilling both civil and judicial functions, holding sessions of the Court, at least monthly. Later, Quarterly Courts were established and three Elders or Aldermen were added to the Court and Magistracy. After the union of Portsmouth and Newport, under one general government, the judiciary system was revised and trial by jury instituted. The magistrates of each town had authority to call a Court, every first Tuesday of each month at Newport and every first Thursday of each month at Portsmouth, wherein actions might be entered, juries empannelled and causes tried, provided it was not "in the matter of life and limb." An appeal could be taken from the lower or town Court to the Court of Quarter Sessions, held upon the four Quarter Days, which were the first Tuesday in July and the first Tuesday in January, the Wednesday after the 12th of March and the Wednesday after the 12th of October. The last two were styled Parliamentary or General Courts. The Judges of these several Courts followed the precepts of the English Common Law and all writs and processes were according to English practise.

Two other important orders issued from the General Court, held at Portsmouth, August 6th, 1640. One related to the organization, equipment and training of the militia or Train Bands of the two towns, with exemptions and penalties prescribed. This order provided for eight musters in each Plantation of one day each "to attend their coulers by eight of the clock in the morning" and "openlie in the field be exercised by their Commanders and Officers." In addition to the eight town drills each year, two General Musters were held, "one to be disciplined at Newport, the other at Portsmouth."

The second order, perhaps first in importance, related to town and Colony treasuries to the end, "that each town shall have a joyned and an equal supply of the Money in the Treasury for the necessary uses of

the same," the Governor, Deputy Governor and one Assistant from each town being named to warrant the receipts and expenditures "according to the determination of the Major Vote of the Townsmen." These two general orders provided for the financial affairs of towns and Colony and for the protection of the people by a disciplined militia,—both the sinews of Peace and War.

#### RHODE ISLAND ON AQUIDNECK, A COMMONWEALTH.

The union of the two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, in 1640, prepared the way for the final act in the Declaration of Rights of a Colonial state. At the General Court of Election began and held at Portsmouth, from the 16th to the 19th of March, 1641, the two towns being assembled, enacted as follows:

#### A DEMOCRATIC STATE.

"IT IS ORDERED AND UNANIMOUSLY AGREED UPON, THAT THE GOVERNMENT WHICH THIS BODIE POLITICK DOOTH ATTEND UNTO IN THIS ISLAND, AND THE JURISDICTION THEREOF, IN FAVOUR OF OUR PRINCE IS A DEMOCRACIE, OR POPULAR GOVERNMENT; THAT IS TO SAY, IT IS IN THE POWRE OF THE BODY OF FREEMEN ORDERLY ASSEMBLED, OR THE MAJOR PART OF THEM, TO MAKE OR CONSTITUTE JUST LAWS, BY WHICH THEY WILL BE REGULATED, AND TO DEPUTE FROM AMONG THEMSELVES SUCH MINISTERS AS SHALL SEE THIEM FAITHFULLY EXECUTED BETWEEN MAN AND MAN."

#### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

"IT WAS FURTHER ORDERED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THIS PRESENT COURTE, THAT NONE BEE ACCOUNTED A DELINQUENT FOR DOCTRINE: PROVIDED, IT BE NOT DIRECTLY REPUGNANT TO YE GOVERNMENT OR LAWES ESTABLISHED."

#### THE STATE SEAL.

"IT IS ORDERED THAT A MANUEL SEAL SHALL BE PROVIDED FOR THE STATE, AND THAT THE SIGNETT OR ENGRAVING THEREOF, SHALL BE A SHEAFE OF ARROWS BOUND UP, AND IN THE LIESS OR BOND, THIS MOTTO INDENTED:

"AMOR VINCET OMNIA."

#### LAND TENURE ON AQUETHNECK.

*It is Ordered, Established and Decreed, unanimouslic, that all men's Proprieties in their Lands of the Island, and the Jurisdiction thereof, shall be such, and soe free, that neyther the State nor any Person or Persons shall intrude into it, molest him in itt, to deprive him of anything whatsoever that is, or shall be within that or any of the bounds thercof; and that this Tenure and Propriety of his thererin shall be continued to him or his; or to whomsoever he shall assign it for Ever.*

The election of officers at this General Court, 1641, resulted as follows:

Governor, William Coddington.

Deputy Governor, William Brenton.

Assistants, { John Coggeshall,  
Robert Harding,  
William Baulston,  
John Porter.

Secretary, William Dyer.

Treasurers, { William Baulston,  
Robert Jeoffreys.

Sergeants, { Thomas Gorton,  
Henry Bull.

Constables, { Thomas Cornell,  
Henry Bishop.

The several acts of the Portsmouth General Court, March, 1641, were the final Declaration of a Democracy in civil affairs with religious liberty in matters spiritual in the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck. The mind of a master Statesman must have dictated the two orders that declared the principles of the founders of the two towns, parties to the compact. In this brief instrument of less than a hundred words is embodied the principle of *Popular Sovereignty*, the doctrine of the *Supremacy of Just Laws* and the allegiance of the people to the *Magistrates*, chosen by the major vote of the electorate.

Still further, no person could be called to judgment in matters of religious faith, doctrine or practise, unless such practise should be repugnant to the laws or government of the State.

We have already seen that the doctrines of civil and religious freedom had been under debate for centuries before the Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic and that great minds had declared and great souls had, in the face of persecution and physical death, testified to their faith in the rights of man. Colonial life in America had for years experimented with certain features of individual and civic freedom, but it was given to a great body of men and women, founders of the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck, setting small estimate on doctrinal polemics and erratic leadership, with profound convictions and clear vision, to found a Colonial Commonwealth, dedicated to civil and soul liberty, thereby establishing the first state in the world with institutions, laws and administration in harmony with the principles of Justice, Equality and Fraternity among men. To give emphasis to this great transaction, the Decree of a Free State was

adopted unanimously, and sealed with the most fitting motto, "*Amor Vincit Omnia,—Love Will Conquer All Things.*"

On the 17th of September, 1641, at Newport, the General Court of Freemen ordered that "if any Person or Persons on the Island, whether Freemen or Inhabitant, shall by any means, open or covert, endeavor to bring in any other Powre than what is now established (except it be by our Prince by Lawfull commission), shall be accounted a delinquent under the head of Perjurie."

"It is ordered that the Law of the last Court made concerning Liberte of Conscience in Doctrine is perpetuated."

#### A FREE SCHOOL IN 1640.

In testimony to the intelligence and farsighted policy of the founders of the Colony, permanent provision was made for education by setting apart public lands, building school houses and providing land and salary for a teacher. Mr. Robert Lenthall taught the free school in Newport from 1640 to 1642.

In furtherance of the purpose of the founders to procure a Royal Patent "for this Island and Islands, and the lands adjacent," it was voted, at a meeting of The General Court of the Colony, held at Newport, September 19, 1642, "to draw up Petition or Petitions, and to send letter or letters for the same end to Sir Henry Vane," and a Committee was appointed for the transaction of the business consisting of Gov. Coddington, Deputy Gov. Brenton, the Assistants, Messrs. Easton, Coggeshall, Porter and Baulston, William Dyer, Capt. Jeoffreys, Capt. Harding and Mr. John Clarke. The subject of a Royal Patent for the Island was first acted on by the Freemen of Newport on December 17th, 1639, the first year of the town. The Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck now affirms its purpose to secure a Patent, independent of any other community or plantation and appoints its chief officers a Committee to transact the business at the expense of the Colony. Rev. Dr. Adlam, a Baptist minister of the John Clarke Memorial Church of Newport, in an address before the Newport Historical Society, Jan. 19, 1871, well interprets the minds of the Founders as to a Patent for Aquidneck. He said, "It is evident that those who first settled Newport and Portsmouth did not intend to join themselves with any other community, but wished to be alone; to form their own government, pass their own laws, and, unimpeded, manage their own affairs; for they wished the charter to embrace only the Island.

That they meant to be independent of all others, we have the direct testimony of Dr. Clarke; for when he went to Plymouth to ascertain if Aquidneck fell within their Patent, he said to the authorities of that place, that they were resolved, through the help of Christ, to get clear

of all, and be of ourselves. They had no more intention of incorporating themselves with Roger Williams and his settlement than they had of incorporating themselves with Plymouth or Massachusetts. There was no community, indeed, that fully harmonized with them. Their aim was to found a state where Liberty should be seen to be consistent with the reign of Law.

Under date of March 13, 1644, the Freemen of the Colony, in General Court assembled at Newport, ordered "that the Island commonly called Aquidneck, shall be from henceforth called the Isle of Rhodes, or *Rhode Island*."

We find on the Island of Aquidneck (Rhode Island) a full-fledged DEMOCRATIC STATE, in the year 1641. Two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, constitute the "State." The freemen have elected a Governor, a Deputy Governor, Assistant, a Secretary, a Treasurer, Sergeants and Constables. The freemen have unanimously agreed on the order and authority—the governing bodies and the methods of making and executing "Just Lawes." They have provided "Quarter Session Courts," and inferior courts as well as "A General Court," or "General Assembly." A State Treasury has been created. "Traine Bands" are established for military protection, "*Libertie of Conscience in point of Doctrine is perpetuated*," and "It is ordered, that if any Person or Persons on the Island, whether freemen or inhabitant, shall by any means open or covet, endeavor to bring in any other Powre than what is now established (except it be from our Prince by Lawfull commission) shall be accounted a delinquent under the head of Perjurie." In the fulfilment of Colonial authority, the General Court, in Sept. 17, 1641, meeting at Newport, passed laws relating to the killing of deer on the Island, to Indian depredations, to the militia of the Colony, the freeman's oath, military training, price of Indian corn per bushel, a general pardon of all offenders and order as to the General Treasurer's accounts. This Colonial government begun March 12, 1640, with William Coddington as Governor and William Brenton Deputy Governor, continued by annual elections and legislation until May 19, 1647, when it was superseded by the Patent obtained by Mr. Williams, in London in 1644, under the title of "*Providence Plantations in Narragansett Bay*."

On September 17th, 1644, Mr. Williams arrived in Boston with a paper styled "*A Charter of Incorporation for Providence Plantations in the Narragansett Bay in New England*." The instrument is signed by Robert, Earl of Warwick as Governor in Chief, followed by the names of several Colonial Commissioners, among which is the name of H. Vane. Reference is made to the towns of Providence, Portsmouth and Newport, but no mention is made of the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck.

The chief guaranty is civil government similar and in no respect differing in rights and privileges to the provisions of the Charters of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay and other Colonies. No reference is made to religious liberty, nor to Indian land titles, but "Laws, Constitutions and Punishments for the Civil Government of the said Plantations must be conformable to the Laws of England, so far as the Nature and Constitution of the place will admit." Mr. Williams' Charter was received with rejoicing at Providence but was universally repudiated by the settlers of Aquidneck. Mr. Williams had ignored the large Plantations on Rhode Island with five times the population and wealth of Providence and had assumed to secure a charter with authority over Portsmouth and Newport without the consent or knowledge of the inhabitants of the Island. Still more, he had attached the name *Providence Plantations* to the three settlements, when, as yet, Providence had no organized government, the community being merely a congeries of families, with no recognized leader or head, and no magistracy of any sort. Richman properly calls the Providence Plantations, at this time, a "non-entity," and it is difficult to understand how Sir Henry Vance could endorse the charter of Providence Plantations, knowing well, as he did, the history of the Island towns and sending by Mr. Roger Williams as bearer, the scathing letter of reproof to Providence for "such headiness, tumults, disorders and injustice." One would not be surprised if Mr. Williams suggested the letter, and Mr. Henry C. Dorr credits him with doing so.

Governor Coddington, Chief Magistrate of the Island towns, opposed the acceptance of the Williams' charter, in which he was supported by the majority of the electorate. Dr. Clarke, while recognizing Mr. Williams' "headiness" in securing a charter without the authority of the great body of the people, whom it was supposed to benefit, was more favorable to its acceptance, and, after three years' delay, during which time no action was taken under it, a General Court of Election was held at Portsmouth, May 19-21, 1647. "It was agreed that all should set their hands to an engagement to the charter," an achievement of Dr. Clarke's diplomatic and conciliatory spirit. It was also agreed that Warwick should have the same privileges as Providence. Thus the four towns, Portsmouth, Newport, Providence and Warwick came, by the consent of all, to be the COLONY OF PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

The officers elected were:

President, John Coggeshall.

Assistants, { Roger Williams, Providence.  
                  John Sanford, Portsmouth.  
                  William Coddington, Newport.  
                  Randall Holden, Warwick.

General Recorder, William Dyer.

Treasurer, Jeremy Clarke.

It was ordered that an anchor be the seal of the Colony.

It was also voted that a tax of £100 be levied to pay Mr. Williams' expenses for obtaining the charter,—£50 from Newport, £30 from Portsmouth and £20 from Providence, indicating by the relative amounts apportioned the towns, that Providence had one-fifth the financial ability of the Island towns.

The great act of this first session of the General Assembly of the Colony at Newport was the adoption of the first General Code of Laws for the Colony, which had been drawn up at Newport and sent to the several towns for examination. Judge Staples, in the Annals of the Town of Providence, assumes that the Code was drawn at Newport, and that this is referred to in the request of the Committee as "the model that hath been lately shown unto us by our worthy friends of the Island." Governor Arnold clearly states that this Code was prepared by the men of learning on the Island. As Gov. Coddington did not favor the adoption of the Charter, and would not accept the Presidency under it, it is fair to conclude that the Code was not his work. It is safe to assume that Dr. John Clarke, the scholar, was its author, aided possibly by the able Secretary of the Rhode Island Colony, Mr. William Dyer.

The Laws, codified from English Common Law, were introduced by a Preamble as to Civil and Religious Liberty, and their tenure suspiciously suggests their author.

IT IS AGREED BY THIS PRESENT ASSEMBLY THUS INCORPORATE, AND BY THIS PRESENT ACT DECLARED, THAT THE FORME OF GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED IN PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IS DEMOCRATICALL; THAT IS TO SAY, A GOVERNMENT HELD BY YE FREE AND VOLUNTARIE CONSENT OF ALL, OR THE GREATER PARTE OF TIE FREE INHABITANTS.

THE NEXT ORDER GUARANTEES "EACH MAN'S PEACEABLE AND QUIETT ENJOYMENT OF HIS RIGHT AND LIBERTIE, NOTWITHSTANDING OUR DIFFERENT CONSCiences, TOUCHING THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS."

The towns of Newport and Portsmouth were entrusted with the duty of perfecting the means of enforcing the Code and the manner and time of organizing monthly and quarterly Courts. The trading posts in the Narragansett Country were assigned to Newport, and that on Prudence to Portsmouth.

This remarkable Code, emanated from the Island towns and as Governor Arnold states, the principles,—Democracy and religious freedom,—were "exclusively Rhode Island (Aquadneck) doctrines and to her belongs the credit of them both." The following remarkable testimony as to the

Aquidneck Code is also from the pen of our Rhode Island historian, Gov. Arnold. "We hazard little in saying that the digest of 1647, for simplicity of diction, unencumbered as it is by the superfluous verbiage that clothes our modern statutes in learned obscurity; for breadth of comprehension, embracing as it does the foundation of the whole body of law, on every subject, which has since been adopted; and for vigor, and originality of thought and boldness of expression, as well as for the vast significance and the brilliant triumph of the principles it embodies, presents a model of legislation which has never been surpassed." Arnold's History of Rhode Island, Vol. I, p. 206.

There is one article in this Code that reflects and expresses most completely the delicate regard of the founders of the Island towns for the consciences as well as the conscience liberty of their fellows, and anticipating by several years the advent of the Quakers. "Forasmuch as the consciences of sundry men, truly conscientiable, may scruple the giving or taking an oath, and it would be noways suitable to the nature and constitution of our place (who professeth ourselves to be men of different consciences, and not one willing to force another) to Debar such as cannot do so, eyther from bearing office amongst us, or from giving in testimony in a case depending," it was enacted that an affirmation before a Judge of Record should be accounted of as full force as an oath, so sensitive was the Aquidneck legislators even to anticipating conditions not then existant.

The Code is to be found in Vol. I, Rhode Island Colonial Records, pages 156-208, inclusive. In its text as well as in its preamble it confirms and maintains the rights of the people in religious concerns, as did all subsequent legislation under the charter.

It is certain that no body of persons in our American Colonial life put the doctrine of religious toleration to so severe a test as did the disciples of George Fox, known by the name of Friends or Quakers. As Newport was well known to them as a place of religious freedom, this town became their City of Refuge, on this side the Atlantic. Hither, in 1653, came the Quaker-Pilgrim Mayflower, a little vessel, named the Woodhouse, built by an English Quaker, manned by Quakers, with a cargo of English Quakers, thirteen in all, two landing in New York and eleven in Newport. They were cordially welcomed to the Island, and were treated fraternally in both towns. Their doctrines and conduct were so acceptable to the people that many converts were made from among the most influential, intelligent and wealthy people of the Island. Governor Coddington, his son William, William Brenton, Nicholas Easton, John Cranston, Henry Bull, Walter Clarke, John Easton, Caleb Carr, William Wanton, John Wanton,—all of whom were afterwards Gover-

nors of Rhode Island,—became the disciples of George Fox and administered the government of the Colony, as far as the executive functions allowed, according to the civic principles of their faith. Mary Dyer, wife of William Dyer, the Secretary of the Colony for ten years, was among the many women who adopted the doctrines of the Friends, and was hung therefor on Boston Common, in 1660, for what Gov. Endicott and the Bay Colony regarded "pernicious and dangerous doctrine." When George Fox came to New England in 1671 he made Newport his headquarters and the first Friends' Meeting in New England was established by him, in Portsmouth, in the vicinity of the original town site of Pocasset, of 1638.

It is noteworthy that the original Colony of Rhode Island, 1640, was the only part of New England that extended the hand of welcome and friendship to the Quakers, and the only one in which they came into political control, holding it practically for nearly a century, the last Quaker Governor being Stephen Hopkins, who was also a member of The Continental Congress and a signer of The Declaration of Independence. The attitude of other Colonies and leading individuals was hostile to the Friends even unto their death. Roger Williams, in his polemic passion, wrote, "I have therefore publicly declared myself, that a due and moderate restraint, and punishing of *these incivilities* (of the Quakers), (though pretending conscience), is so far from persecution (properly so called), that it is a duty and command of God unto all mankind, first in families, and thence into all human societies." Plymouth and Connecticut exercised a "moderate restraint" of the Quakers by whippings and banishment, while Massachusetts Bay Colony punished Quaker "incivilities" by scourgings, branding, torturing, cutting off of ears and public executions by hangings on Boston Common.

In 1657, the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England, in session at Boston, unanimously adopted a letter to the Colony of Rhode Island, on information that "divers Quakers are arrived this summer at Rhode Island (Newport) and entertained there, which may prove dangerous to the Colonies," and requesting "that you remove those Quakers that have been received, and for the future prohibite their coming amongst you." President Benedict Arnold, a non-Quaker, replied, saying among other things, "And as concerning these Quakers (so-called), which are now among us, we have no law among us whereby to punish any for only declarling by words, &c., their mindes and understandings concerning the things and ways of God as to salvation and an eternal condition." President Arnold promised to bring the letter before the General Assembly at its next meeting in March, 1658, at Portsmouth.

The General Assembly meeting on the Island, in 1658, returned a reply to the Commissioners in which they recited the ancient principle of

religious liberty as the foundation of the Colony, as follows: "Now, whereas freedom of different consciences, to be protected from inforcements was the principle ground of our charter, both with respect to our humble suit for it, and also to the true intent of the Honorable and renowned Parliment of England in grantinge of the same unto us; which freedom we still prize as the greatest happiness that men can possess in this world." The letter asserts also the supremacy of the civil law and magistracy, to both of which Quakers with all other inhabitants are amenable, insisting that "theire may be noe damadge, or infringement of that chiefe principle in our charter concerninge freedome of consciences." This letter to the Commissioners is a splendid illustration of courteous diplomacy and is signed by John Sanford, Clerk of the Assembly.

Before taking leave of the early Colonial Records, we must note the date of Incorporation of Providence in a town government, under date March 14, 1648-1649. On the petition of the freemen of the town of Providence for "freedom and libertie to incorporate themselves into a body politicks," the General Assembly conferred unto "the free inhabitants of the town of Providence, \* \* \* a free and absolute charter of civill incorporation and government, to be known by the Incorporation of Providence Plantation in the Narragansett Bay, in New England, together with full power and authoritie to governe and rule themselves and such others as shall hereafter inhabit within anypart of said Plantation, by such a form of civill government as by voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of them, shall be found most suitable unto their state and condition." The order for a charter was signed by John Warner of Warwick, Clerk of the Assembly.



## CHAPTER XVIII

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THE COLONY OF PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN  
NARRAGANSETT BAY



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE COLONY OF PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN NARRAGANSETT BAY.

Roger Williams left Providence, on his self-imposed mission to England, in the autumn of 1643, on an errand unknown to the Rhode Island Colony on Aquidneck. In 1640 this colony had chosen a committee, consisting of Governor Coddington or John Clarke and eight others, to secure a patent from the Aquidneck settlements and to secure the assistance of Sir Harry Vane in aid of that end. Mr. Williams knew of the efforts of the southern colony and proceeded, at his own venture, to forestall the Newport plan. In that purpose Mr. Williams was successful and in September, 1644, he returned to Providence with a patent of "Providence Plantations in Narragansett Bay in New England," signed by eleven of the seventeen Royal Commissioners, one of whom was Sir Harry Vane, the friend of the colony on the island. Mr. Williams returned to Providence by way of Boston and was received with great rejoicings in his home town. Not so at Newport, where it was difficult to restrain the angry passions of considerate men for what they considered a violation of all principles of civil comity and justice. Three years elapsed before this act of usurpation of rights and authority was in a measure condemned, and local conditions compelled the acceptance of the Williams patent of 1644 by the two towns at the lower end of the bay. Governor Coddington never accepted the Williams patent for two reasons—he was not in love with the disorderly doings at Providence and naturally resented the usurpation of the colonial functions and orderly government on the island by the William coterie at Providence. It seemed to him an illustration of the old adage, "The tail wags the dog." Although unanimously elected to the office of an assistant at the first election of the Providence Plantations' General Assembly, held at Portsmouth, May, 1647, and was chosen Governor the following year, Mr. Coddington refused to serve at both elections, and never accepted an office under the rule of the "Plantations."

The first General Assembly, held under the new colonial patent, met at Portsmouth, on Aquidneck, May 19, 1647, and continued in session three days. It was styled "*The General Court for the Colonic and Province of Providence*," and was called to include the three towns, Newport, Portsmouth and Providence, named in the patent as the colonial towns. Mr. John Coggeshall, of Newport, representing the largest town, was chosen moderator. It was a Democratic Assembly and it was found, on a roll-call and vote, that a majority of the freemen of the three towns

were present or represented. Providence sent Gregory Dexter, William Wickenden, Thomas Olney, Robert Williams, Richard Waterman, Roger Williams, William Field, John Greene, John Smith and John Lippitt, giving instructions as to their acts as legislators and "committing you unto the protection of the Almighty, wishing you a comfortable voyage, a happy success and a safe return unto us again." A quorum was fixed at forty members. All took their engagement under the patent or charter. They agreed "to receive and be governed by the laws of England, together with the way of Administration of them so far as the nature and Constitution of the Plantation will admit." A "modell" of general laws for the whole colony had been drawn up "by our worthy Friends of the Island," and the Providence delegation was instructed to support it as the code of laws for the colony. The Assembly adopted this code and ordered a copy to be sent to each town for its consideration, adoption or amendment by the towns before the next meeting of the General Court. By vote, the town of Warwick was added to the colony. It was voted that "the General Court of Tryal" should be held at Newport on the second Tuesday of June, next ensuing. At the election of colonial officers, the following persons were chosen: President, John Coggeshall, of Newport. Assistants, Roger Williams, of Providence; John Sanford, of Portsmouth; William Coddington, of Newport; Randall Holden, of Warwick. General Recorder, William Dyre; Treasurer, Jeremy Clarke—both of Newport.

It was ordered that all general bills for legislation by the General Court, originating in the towns, should be considered by all the towns and approved by a majority before their presentation to the Court. Still further, a committee of six from each town, twenty-four in all, must see to it that a major part of the colony concurred before such bill was considered by the General Court and by it ratified as a law. In the case of bills originating in the General Court, such bills, after debate, were referred to the towns for consideration; if approved by a majority of the voters of the towns, the bill became a law till the next Assembly should confirm or nullify it. Here we have the initiative and referendum, originating in legislation in Rhode Island, in 1647.

It was ordered that the General Court of Election should be held annually on the first Tuesday after the 15th of May, "if wind and weather hinder not." The "General Court of Tryall" (Supreme Court of the colony), of which the President of the colony was Chief Justice, was ordered to meet immediately, on the adjournment of the General Court (Assembly).

Each town was ordered to choose two surveyors of highways, who should fix the time for mending roads, also keep a record of all cattle exported from the town. Any person exporting cattle without notice to

the surveyors should forfeit the cattle or their value. The following orders were adopted: Forms for the engagement of colonial officers; the town councils of Newport and Portsmouth shall decide as to monthly and quarterly courts; towns were to choose men to superintend the killing of goats and swine, to prevent dishonest slaughter; John Cooke and Thomas Brownell were chosen water-bailiffs for the colony; "the seale of the Province shall be an anchor;" town councils should consist of six men; the sea-laws, "called the Lawes of Oleron," shall be in force for the benefit of seamen upon the island; no person should leave the Assembly without consent, and, if allowed to go, should leave his proxy: "as Mr. Roger Williams hath taken great paines and expended much tyme in the obtayninge of the charter, for this Province, of Noble Lords and Governors," it was ordered to grant Mr. Williams one hundred pounds—Newport to pay fifty, Portsmouth thirty and Providence, including Warwick, twenty, in proportion to ability and numbers; Newport was charged with care of trading houses in the Narragansett country, Portsmouth with Prudence, and Pawtuxet was left to the choice of Providence or Newport; freedom was granted the free inhabitants of the Province to erect an Artillery Garden "to advance the Art Military (this is the first legislation in any American colony relating to a school for military training); the Dutch, French and other aliens were forbidden to trade with the Indians in the Province; laws were made as to train-bands in all the details of military matters; the sale of guns and ammunition to the Indians was forbidden, and a code of laws was enacted for the government of the Province. A review of this code and the public administration of justice under it will be given in the judicial history of Rhode Island, to which reference is made.

It was ordered that the General officers write to Massachusetts and to Pawtuxet people, proposing a union with this colony.

Provisions were made for eight general training days, each year, with full instructions as to officers, men, ammunition, arms, forfeitures, etc., etc. "Every inhabitant of the Island above sixteen or under sixty yeares of age, shall always be provided of a Musket, one pound of powder, twenty bullets, and two fadom of Match, with sword, rest, bandaleers, all completely furnished." The President of the colony, the four Assistants and the captain of each town band or company constituted a council of war. An alarm of danger was given by "three Muskets distinctly discharged, and a Herald appointed to go speedilie threwe the towne, and crie, Alarum! Alarum! and the drum to beat incessantly."

An act provided severe penalties for selling, giving, delivering or in any way "conveying any powder, shott, lead, gunn, pistol, sword, dagger, halberd or pike to the Indians that are or may prove offensive to this Colonie."

A form for the engagement of the General officers was adopted, and, what was quite unusual, a reciprocal engagement was drawn, by which the inhabitants of the plantations "do hereby engage ourselves to the utmost of our power to support and uphold you in your faithful performance thereof."

We can readily understand how so much business was transacted, May 19, 20 and 21, 1647, when we remember that the law-makers worked from eight o'clock in the morning till six at night, with an hour for dinner.

The colony of Providence Plantations certainly starts well, with a body of excellent laws and acts, inspired by the spirit of honesty, purity and loyalty.

A digest of the first formal code of laws will be found under the chapter under THE JUDICIARY. The author was a member of the Rhode Island colony of Aquidneck and was either Governor Coddington or Dr. John Clarke, with the probabilities favoring Dr. Clarke. Governor Coddington was so strongly opposed to the acceptance of the Williams patent, that it is difficult to believe that he would set himself to the task of framing a code for the colony of Providence Plantations. Dr. Clarke was educated far in advance of the Governor, had a judicial mind and temper, and finally endorsed the new patent; it is more than probable that he constructed the code from existing English law treatises.

The preamble to the code is a remarkably strong declaration of civil and religious liberty and in its definition of democracy relates itself directly to the foundation principles of the island colony adopted March, 1641. These principles and the engagement are worthy of careful consideration and comparison with the civil compact of March 7, 1638, at the founding of Portsmouth.

On May 16, 1648, the General Court of Election (General Assembly) met at Providence, electing Nicholas Easton, Moderator; William Dyre, Clerk; Jeremy Clarke, Assistant and Treasurer; William Coddington, President; Assistants, Roger Williams, William Baulston, John Smith; Philip Sherman, Recorder; Alexander Partridge, General Sergeant.

Orders were enacted as follows: Six men of each town chosen, in whom the General Court should continue; the "Court of Tryal" shall be held where the action arose or where the persons were taken; as Mr. Coddington did not appear to take the office of President, Jeremy Clarke was chosen President; rules as to time and place of Court sessions were fixed; that each town shall meet to elect town officers within ten days; that the prison at Newport be made the colony prison; a seal for the colony was adopted and a body of rules for the well ordering of the General Assembly.

In March, 1649, the General Assembly met at Warwick. A charter was granted for the freemen of the town of Providence to incorporate

themselves into a body politic. Under the power conferred by this charter the first civil government was ordained and established at Providence.

In 1649 the General Court of Election was held at Warwick, when general colonial officers were chosen. John Smith, of Warwick, was chosen President; Assistants, Thomas Olney, John Sanford, John Clarke, Samuel Gorton; John Clarke, General Treasurer, holding office till the separation of the towns in 1651. Orders were adopted as to the correction of corrupt voting, fixing English values to Indian peag, fixing a fine of ten pounds to the man who shall refuse after election to take the office of President of the colony, and five pounds for a refusal to act as an Assistant; laws concerning military officers were passed, letters were ordered sent "to Benedict Arnold and his father, and the rest of Patuxit, aboute thear subjeetinge to this Collonie;" an order that each town should "provide a prison with a chimney;" it was granted "unto Mr. Roger Williams to have leave to suffer a native (Indian), his hyered household servant to kill fowls for him in his piece at Narragansett about his house." Also "it was granted unto Mr. Roger Williams to have leave to sell a little wine or stronger water to some natives in theare sicknesse."

The fourth General Court of Election, the last before the SEPARATION, took place at Newport, May 23, 1650. Nicholas Easton, of Newport, was chosen Moderator and President. William Field, of Providence, John Porter, of Portsmouth, John Clarke, of Newport, and John Wickes, of Warwick, were chosen Assistants; John Clarke, General Treasurer; Philip Sherman, General Recorder, and Richard Knight, General Sergeant. John Clarke, General Treasurer, reported for the year 1649 that he had received nothing as Treasurer and therefore had no money in his hands. Additional rules were made to govern the courts. Each town was ordered to have a magazine for defence; Providence must have "one barrell of good powder, five hundred pounds of lead, six pikes and six muskets all in good care and fit for service;" Portsmouth must have double and Newport treble the Providence armory, while Warwick had the same as Providence. From the ratio of supplies of the magazines, we conclude that the population of the island towns was five times that of Providence and that Providence and Warwick were equals in inhabitants in 1650.

The office of Attorney-General was created at this session and William Dyre, of Newport, was chosen as the first to fill that office in Rhode Island. Hugh Bewitt was chosen General Solicitor. The last act of this General Assembly declared "a severe judgment according to the judgment of his peers" against any person that "shall speake wordes of disgrace contemptuously undervaluing of that Honored State of England." "FFINIS" is written in capital letters at the end of this act, and the curtain is rung down on "the Providence Plantations in Narragansett," to be rung up

again in May, 1654, after a recess of nearly four years. The Coddington *caup d'etat* has separated the island colony from the main and the Williams patent is recognized only at Warwick and Providence.

At the session of the Representatives Assembly, held October 26, 1650, an order was passed relative to the rules for the Assembly. Another that no person shall at any time be banished from this colony, notwithstanding any law on the statute book. Another as to arrest of strangers, and another constituting adultery the only ground of divorce.

Owing to the withdrawal of the Aquidneck towns from the Plantations, the Representative Assembly met at Providence, November 4, 1651, and chose Mr. Williams as their agent to go to England and secure, if possible a confirmation of their charters for the two towns at the head of the bay and the Assembly voted one hundred pounds to meet his expenses. In the meantime, Plymouth and the Bay colony renewed their claim for Warwick, and Plymouth was advised to take possession of that plantation by force, unless the purchasers would willingly submit to that colony. At this time, Mr. Coddington had returned from England with a commission signed by Judge John Bradshaw, President of the Council of State, under the Commonwealth, constituting him Governor of the island towns for life, with a council of six men to be named by the people and approved by him. This form of government seems to have been suggested by Cromwell himself as representing the new colonial policy of the Protector, uniting the life tenure of the chief of the colony with a council chosen by the people, as representing "the Democracye" of the island towns. Arnold says that great alarm fell over the colony, "especially by the large party in the subjected islands, who, being opposed to Coddington, found themselves, as they thought, at the mercy of a *dictator*." Mr. Arnold does not satisfy us in this very general and sweeping statement. *Let us see.* It is well known that with the conversion of Dr. Clarke to the Baptist cere monials, and the founding of the Baptist church of Newport in 1644, of which Dr. Clarke was chosen minister, a broad line of separation had been drawn between him and Governor Coddington. Coddington also was known as leaning away from Puritan orthodoxy toward the Quaker principles in religious belief and life. These radical differences were first seen in the treatment accorded the Williams patent, Clarke accepting and Coddington rejecting, and as each had strong friends the community allied itself with one or the other leader, in an orderly fashion. We are at a loss to know to what extent sectarian and civil political variations influenced the people in their treatment of Governor Coddington on his return from England as the Protector's choice for the rulership of the islands. We do know that Mr. Coddington was the able and popular leader of the Rhode Island colony from the exodus to the time of his departure for England in 1649. We also know that he never, for a long period, failed to hold

the confidence of the people and was afterwards elected to the Governorship of the colony, under the Royal Charter, holding the office at the time of his death, November 1, 1678.

Rev. John Callendar, in the dedication of his century discourse, 1739, delivers a flattering but truthful eulogy on Mr. Coddington, and lets light on conditions at Newport, otherwise enveloped in darkness. He says: "In 1651 he (Coddington) had a commission from the supreme authority, then in England, to be Governor of the island, pursuant to a power reserved in the patent; but the people being jealous 'lest the commission might affect their lands and liberties as secured to them by the patent,' he readily laid it down on the first notice from England that he might do so." Still further he says: "If there was any opposition at any time to any of his measures, or if he met with any ungrateful returns from any he had served, it was no more than what several of the other first excellent Governors of the other New England colonies met with, from a people made froward by the circumstances of a wilderness and overjealous of their privileges. \* \* \* History abounds with examples of the mistakes and ingratitude occasioned by that jealousy. \* \* \* He died Governor of the colony—in promoting the welfare and the prosperity of the little Commonwealth which he had in a manner founded."

A number of freemen of Aquidneck, dissatisfied with the Coddington commission sought out Dr. John Clarke as their agent to go to England to secure its repeal. Clarke and Williams left the colony about the same time, one from Boston, the other from New York, on their separate and distinct errands. Both succeeded in their missions. Mr. Williams returned in July, 1654, and the four towns returned to the government under a renewal of the patent of 1644. Dr. Clarke remained in London for twelve years, supporting himself by practice as a physician and returned with the Royal Charter in 1663, after an absence of twelve years.

Several sessions of the General Assembly were held at Providence, Warwick and Pawtuxet between 1650 and May 16, 1654, when the four towns were reunited at Newport in a general election and in legislation. During this vacation period, John Greene, of Warwick, acted as Secretary of the Assembly. Samuel Gorton, of Warwick, was President of the two towns from October, 1651, to May, 1652; John Smith, of Warwick, from May, 1652, to May, 1653, and Gregory Dexter from May, 1653, to May, 1654. The principal legislation was the limitation of the period of negro slavery to ten years, at the end of which term they were to be set free, as was the custom with English servants; the Dutch were forbidden to trade with the Indians, as it interfered with the business of local traders; foreigners, Dutch, French or any other nation, were excluded, except "by the generall consent of our collonie;" slander of persons, "the State and Commonweal of England," was made a punishable

offense; a letter of instruction, advice and comfort was sent to Mr. Williams, in London, in which he was assured, "Your lovinge bedfellow is in health and presents her indeered affection." The letter contains the suggestion, "that it might tend much to the weighhinge of men's mindes, and subjectinge of persons who have been refractory, to yield themselves over as unto a settled government," for Mr. Williams to secure the position of Governor for one year, "and so the Government to bee honorably put upon this place, which might seem to add much weight forever hereafter in the constant and successive deriguation (direction) of the same." This letter was undoubtedly from the heart and pen of Mr. Gregory Dexter, of Providence, and a fair interpretation of the passage quoted is that if Mr. Williams could secure the commission as Governor from the protectorate for a single year, it would secure the seat of colonial government at Providence, with Mr. Williams as the permanent and "constant" executive.

At the meeting of the twelve representatives of Providence and Warwick, at Warwick, December 25, 1652, the commissioners of the plantations took notice of "severall complaints against particulars" in the letter to Roger Williams, "contrarie to the liberties and freedom of the free people of this Colony and contrarie to the ends for which the sayd Roger Williams was sent," and "declared against the same." If this act was, as Mr. Richman suggests, a repudiation of the letter as related to the governorship of Roger Williams, it was a happy way of mending an ugly proposal and put an end to the ambitions of Mr. Williams' friends at Providence and confirms the assertion that strong personal and party feeling existed in Providence for and against Mr. Williams. Gregory Dexter, Moderator (Speaker) of the Assembly stated his reasons for the session, "That the honour of this Collonie lyeth at stake, to keepe ourselves in order and union till the return of our agent from England, that provisions be made that wee be not then found in a rout."

On October 2, 1652, an Order of Council was issued in London revoking the Coddington Commission of Governor of the Island towns and directing the towns to reunite under the Patent of 1644. Williams and Clarke remained in England and sent William Dyre home with the message to the towns. Mr. Dyre on his arrival at Newport, in February, 1653, wrote to the Commissioners of Providence and Warwick, naming a day when he would meet all of the freemen of the towns at Portsmouth to deliver the orders of the Protectorate. Four representatives of Providence and Warwick were sent and returned to report that their labors were fruitless, for the reason that the Island towns claimed that the General Assembly should meet with them for the restoration of the Colony, as the towns on Aquidneck formed most of the population and wealth of the Colony, while the mainland towns claimed that they were

the Colony of Providence Plantations, since the rupture of 1651. On the 18th of March, 1652-3 the town of Newport wrote to "Beloved friends and neighbors" of the mainland towns, "for your and our own safetie and peaceable well-beinge, and that each may enjoy his owne right and equitie, and that the face of authority may be established amongst us," inviting all the freemen to meet in General Assembly for Election at Newport on the first Tuesday after the 15th of May, 1653. Proposals were made as to matters and methods of legislation in the proposed Assembly and the letter was sent by Benedict Arnold, formerly of Pawtuxet. On May 16 the mainland towns, under the name of the "Collony of Providence Plantations" met at Providence and voted that "Wee are therefore enforced to keep in the posture we are in," inasmuch as the terms proposed by either set of towns were not acceptable to the other.

Pending arrangements for the union of the towns, the general officers on Aquidneck, deposed by the Coddington regime, were reinstated and the two towns on the Island elected their town officials. Two elections were held May 16-17, 1653, the Island towns chose John Sandford, Sr., as President, Nicholas Easton and Robert Borden, Assistants, William Lytherland, Recorder, John Coggeshall, Treasurer, and John Easton, Attorney General. They re-adopted the Code of Laws of 1647 and gave liberty to the mainland towns to choose their own General Assistants. The next day some freemen from Providence and Warwick came in and chose Thomas Olney as an Assistant for Providence and Randall Holden for Warwick.

Providence chose Gregory Dexter, President, Stukeley Westcott and John Sayles, Assistants, John Sayles as Treasurer, John Greene, Recorder, and Hugh Bewitt, Sergeant. Orders were passed forbidding provisions sent to the Dutch, that each Plantation should prepare for defense against the Dutch, that no seizure of Dutch vessels or goods be made without orders and that all legal process was to arise in the name of the Commonwealth of England, "without a King or House of Lords."

At the May session of the Assembly at Newport a demand was made on Mr. Coddington for the Statute Book and Secretary's records, which he refused to give up, as he had had no official order that his commission had been withdrawn. This was true, as he never received an order from the English Council of State, cancelling his commission. In assuming legislation for the four towns, the Assembly on the Island chose eight men "for ripening matters that concerne Long Island and in ye case concerning ye Dutch." This War Board was authorized to carry on an offensive and defensive war with the Dutch and "all enemies of the Commonwealth of England," including land forces, privateers, etc. Commissions in the name of Providence Plantations were granted to Capt.

John Underhill, Mr. William Dyre and Edward Hull to proceed against any and all enemies of England and a jury was chosen for the "tryall of prizes." To this legislation, embracing a declaration of war, by the Island towns, the mainland General Assembly entered its most vigorous protest and denial, charging upon the rival legislature an unjustifiable assumption of power and threatening the interposition of the home government and disfranchising Olney and Holden for disloyalty. This action of the up-river towns did not hinder the offensive privateering warfare, instituted at Newport. Underhill, commanding twenty men, occupied an abandoned Dutch fort, Good Hope; Dyre never left his island home, as he had lost rank with all parties; Hull interpreted his commission so liberally that he captured a French ship, which brought him and the Colony into a hot dispute with the New England Confederation; Capt. Baxter seized a vessel belonging to Barnstable, in Plymouth Colony, as it was carrying the goods of an English planter to Oyster Bay. This act brought the Colony into a wordy conflict with the United Colonies. Baxter also seized a Dutch vessel and was pursued to Fairfield harbor by two other Dutch vessels.

In May, 1654, but one General Assembly for election was held and that at Newport. Nicholas Easton of Newport was chosen President; Randall Holden, of Warwick, ranking second in votes, Assistants Thomas Olney, Richard Borden, Edward Smith, Randall Holden, Joseph Torrey, Recorder, John Coggeshall, Treasurer, Capt. John Cranston, Attorney General, and Richard Knight, Sergeant.

As a considerable number of people dissented as to a Colonial union of the four towns, a committee of two from each town was named to advise "concerninge our dissenting friends." Mr. Williams was named as one of the Peace and Union Committee, though he had not yet returned from London.

Four months pass; "the differences and obstructions amongst ye foure Townes of this Collonie of Providence Plantations" are removed, and the following agreements adopted by the twenty-four commissioners, six from each of the four towns: The transactions of the Island towns from the time of separation in 1651 shall remain valid and binding in that Jurisdiction; the same to be true as to the Acts of the mainland towns in their domain; the readoption of the charter of 1644 was affirmed and, with the exception of the General Election, all affairs such as making of laws, etc., should be vested in a legislative commission. The Commissioners who signed the compact on the 31st of August, 1654, and who constituted the first legislative assembly under it were Thomas Harris, Gregory Dexter, John Taylor, William Wickenden, John Browne and Henry Browne, of Providence, William Baulston, Richard Borden, John

Roome, Thomas Cornell, John Briggs, and William Hall, of Portsmouth, Benedict Arnold, Richard Tew, John Coggeshall, John Easton, William Lytherland, and Thomas Gould, of Newport, John Greene, Senior, Randall Holden, Ezekiel Holliman, John Greene, Jun., John Townsend, and Richard Townsend, of Warwick.

We have reached the period when a Colonial government for Rhode Island has reached a state of cohesive permanency. The Aquidneck platform of 1638-40 has been adopted by the four towns, the principles of which are first, popular elections of local and general officers by the whole body of freemen, free from money qualifications in the electorate, full freedom in all matters of religious faith and worship, and the full recognition of the rights of the towns as the units of political strength and unity. Democracy, involving religious liberty has position and power. Clarke, Gorton, Williams and Coddington, Greene, Arnold, Holden and Coggeshall, Baulston, Dexter, Tew, Holliman and Harris, once so divergent, are now so well agreed on the general purposes and methods of a civil state, that they join hands and hearts in a new Colonial pact, pledging allegiance not as in 1644 to King Charles and the Monarchy, but in 1654, swearing allegiance to Oliver Cromwell and the Protectorate. One principle of the government of 1654 was clearly undemocratic and still remains in Rhode Island, a strange survival of an ancient error,—the practice of unequal town representation in the General Assembly. In 1654, Warwick had 38 freemen, Providence 42, Portsmouth 71 and Newport 96,—247 in all. The legislative assembly was composed of 24 members, 6 from each of the four towns. It was not equitable for Warwick with 38 freemen to have the same representation as Portsmouth with nearly twice that number, or for Providence with 42 freemen to have the same representation as Newport with twice that number and more. A just apportionment of one representative for every 10 freemen and a fraction would have given Warwick 4, Providence 4, Portsmouth 7, and Newport 9. In 1918, West Greenwich, with a total population of 509 has one Senator and one Representative, while the city of Providence, with a population of 247,600 has only one Senator and but 24 Representatives.

The town organization, so complete in its mechanism at Portsmouth in 1638, and at Newport in 1639, was made possible at Providence by its incorporation in 1649, and of Warwick about the same date. Prior to its charter, Providence was a Proprietary, in which land holders only possessed the right of voting, while Gorton and the other settlers at Shawomet refrained from organization and the whole company took refuge on Aquidneck until the recognition of the Patent of 1644 and the reception of Warwick to share in its provisions. A fair interpretation of the Rhode Island towns would place Portsmouth and Newport in the class of inde-

pendent town governments from the dates of their settlement until 1647, when they accepted Colonial relations to the English Crown. As neither Providence or Warwick had adopted any form of local or civil government they do not belong to this class. The civic situation may be stated thus:

1636-1638. Providence an unorganized squatter settlement on Indian lands.

1638-1649. Providence a land Proprietary with no organic government. Incorporated as a town, 1649, under the Royal Patent of 1644, the Patent becoming operative on its acceptance by the three towns named in it, May, 1647.

1638-9 to 1647. Portsmouth and Newport, organized two municipalities, independent, cohesive, Colonial; acknowledging and accepting Royal authority, under the English Crown, May, 1647.

1643-1649. Warwick, squatter sovereignty under Indian land titles from Jan. 12, 1643, to incorporation in 1649, accepting supremacy of the English Crown in 1647, on admission into the Confederacy of Rhode Island towns, under the Williams Patent.

Each of the four towns when organized exercised an absolutely free and unbiased choice of its form of government and expressed in its various operations the individualism of the freemen, the qualifications of whom were the expressions of the measure of Democracy of the community. The English type of town or parish did not manifest itself in Rhode Island where Puritanism and independency with radical individualism were most manifest. Each settlement was a law unto itself, or proceeded on the *laissez faire* doctrine of opportunism.

The Commissioners of the four towns held their first meeting at Warwick, August 31, 1654, with Benedict Arnold as Moderator and William Lytherland, clerk, both of Newport. A Court of Elections for the Colony was ordered to be held at Warwick on the 12th of September ensuing,—the Court of Commissioners to meet at the same time. It was ordered that no liquors should be sold to Indians under a penalty of five pounds, that neither French nor Dutch shall trade with Indians in the Colony; that each town must build a prison before May, 1655; on complaint of the violation of the Sabbath as a holy day, because there was no day of recreation, each town was ordered to consider and determine "what days they shall agree upon for their men-servants, maid-servants and children to recreate themselves to prevent the incivilities complained of." The final order of this Court required each town to license and encourage one or two houses for the entertainment of strangers, and to forbid all unlicensed houses from the sale of wine, beer or strong liquors, under a penalty of five pounds.

At the general election on September 12, 1654, Roger Williams was elected President, holding the office three years, with the ablest men of the several towns as assistants, commissioners, and other officers as will appear by reference to the Colonial records. Mr. Williams and Mr. Dexter were asked "to send letters of humble thanksgiving to His Highness the Lord Protector, Sir Harry Vane, Mr. Holland and Mr. John Clarke." A census of the freemen of the Colony gave Newport 96, Portsmouth 71, Providence 42 and Warwick 38—a total of 247. During Mr. Williams' term of office, loyalty to the Protectorate was affirmed and disloyalty to Cromwell or the Parliament of England forfeited the rights of citizenship.

Taxation for Colonial uses was made subject to the control of the Commissioners, while each town was given authority to fix and collect town revenues, with penalties for resistance or non-payment of taxes assessed. The fees of Colonial Commissioners were fixed at three shillings a day to be paid by the towns they represented. In case of refusal to serve or absence from the Court, he must forfeit the fee and pay a fine of six shillings a day. A juryman was allowed a fee of two shillings for each case on which he served. Prison building seems to indicate the prevalence of criminality. Newport was ordered to build a prison at a cost of 80 pounds, Portsmouth to contribute 20 pounds and have a joint use of it. Portsmouth was ordered to build a cage and stocks for the use of both towns on the Island. Warwick was ordered to build a prison to cost 41 pounds, Providence to pay 6 and have joint use, while Providence must build "a sufficient cage or prison, sufficient with a paire of stocks" for the use of both towns. Special committees raised the funds and superintended the work. Whipping posts had been set up and used in all the towns and were used well into the nineteenth century, the last public punishment by whipping being inflicted on the Parade of the Old State House, Providence, July 14, 1837, for horse stealing. Ducking stools for common scolds and minor offences were common. Adultery on the Island was punishable with fifteen stripes on the bare back at Portsmouth, and after a week's respite, similar punishment at Newport. If the crime was committed on the mainland, like measure of whippings were given first at Providence and then at Warwick. In addition a fine of ten pounds was given. For the second offense, the offender was to receive like punishment at all of the four towns and pay a fine of twenty pounds. Adultery on the part of husband or wife, was sufficient cause of divorce, in a suit before a Colonial or town magistrate upon complaint of the offended party. All other grounds of divorce were to be brought before the Commissioner's Court, the Supreme Court of the Colony. It was ordered that "a notorious swearer and curser" shall first be admon-

ished and if he continued "he shall either sitt in ye stocks two hours or pay five shillings." It was ordered that upon the complaint of solicitations to whoredom or of wanton and lascivious tendings, of the assault of a woman for ravishment, the person guilty shall be brought to trial or subjected to some moderate corporal punishment. In case of false charges, the complainant must suffer punishment.

A singular case of a mutual agreement of separation of husband and wife came before the General Court in June, 1655. John Coggeshall, Jr., son of Dea. John Coggeshall, of the First Church, Boston, married Elizabeth, daughter of William Baulston, June 17, 1647, and she became the mother of his three children, John, Elizabeth and William, the last born in 1654. On October 3, 1654, they mutually signed an agreement for divorce. At this Court in session at Portsmouth, Elizabeth petitioned for the libertie of contracting a second marriage, her former husband having been granted such liberty at the May session at Providence. The Court orders that as "by mutuall and voluntarie consent of both parties, Elizabeth, ye late wife, was absolutely separated from him," and "havinge long and mature knowledge of ye case and just grounds of their proceedings," "equall libertie" be granted her. Mr. Coggeshall married second, Patience Throckmorton, age fifteen, who became the mother of nine children, she dying in 1676; he then married a third wife, Mary ——, who gave him four children,—nineteen in all,—nine boys and ten girls. We notice here the human productivity of a slight variation of the doctrine of polygamy,—a study for modern sociology.

It was in March, 1656, that Mr. Coddington came before the General Assembly and submitted to "ye authoritie of his Highness in this Colonie as it is now united, and that with all my heart." He had waited the revocation of his commission, which was never formally made, and also he had waited until assured that the reunion of the four towns was an assured fact and that a stable government had been established in the Colony, as free as possible from the various local disturbances current in an earlier day. Newport had elected him as first Commissioner in March, 1656, recognizing in him the ability and fidelity of their first citizen and founder. Consciously innocent of all the false charges made at home and in London concerning his relations to the Dutch and willing to meet his enemies in an open Court, in the tribunal of his peers, he accepts, in a courageous spirit and with a magnanimity worthy of his exalted character, the post of legislator and judge, in the interests of his island and town. He was received by his elect associates in a manner, "composinge to ye good and comfort of all parts of ye Colonie, and ye establishing of peace and love among us." Coddington's arch enemy, William Dyre, had long since lost position in the Colony, and only frequently appears in public, and then often to his dishonor.

For humanity sweeps onward;  
Where to-day the martyr stands,  
On the morrow crouches Judas,  
With the gold dust in his hands;  
While the hooting mob of yesterday,  
In silent awe returns  
To glean his sacred ashes,  
For history's golden urn.

While Dyer has gone to defeat, Coddington waits renewed and greater honors from a grateful and well-established Colony, founded on the imperishable base of the Boston-Aquidneck Settlements.

The liquor problem was as vexatious in Colonial days as in ours, if not so complex and far-reaching. It was the daily habit of most men and of some women to drink some kinds of alcoholic beverages. In fact many regarded the habit not only as healthful, but as promotive of efficiency in physical and mental toil. Clergymen drank to give spiritual values to their sermons. Lawyers and judges drank to clarify legal doubts, farmers drank to lighten heavy toil; mechanics to add skill to workmanship. All drank to cheer lonely hours and enliven the *ennui* of life with the cheer, wit, repartee and song of the social glass. Two great evils were apparent in the early Colonial days: One was the insane love for "strong water" and the beastly, savage intoxication of the Indians; the other crippling the defensive power of white men in their eternal watchfulness of the Indian wiles. In a single year, 1655-6, at Providence, 1,000 gallons of rum, brandy, white wines and other alcoholic liquors were bought and sold at Providence by Roger Mowry, Henry Fowler, John Sayles, Mary Pray, Annie Williams. The next year, 1656-7 an equal amount was bought and consumed in Providence, and so the purchase, retail and consumption went on from year to year. In 1655, the General Court meeting at Providence, a committee of eight men, with Captain John Cranston as chairman and Benedict Arnold, Thomas Olney and Henry Bull as members, was chosen "to ripen against morninge, some way for suppressinge of selling liquers,"—the Court to meet at a half an hour after sunrise, about seven o'clock A. M. The liquor bill as adopted ordered that two ordinaries or taverns be opened in each of the four towns and that no others shall sell any sort of strong drink, either to English or Indian by retail, that is no less than a gallon to a single purchaser, under penalty of a fine of five pounds.

It was further ordered that the tavern keeper shall not sell to Indians more than a pint of liquor a day to a person. In case the Indian should be found drunk, the man who sold him the liquor shall pay a fine of 20 shillings and the Indian be fined ten shillings, "or be whipped or laide neck and heels." Right-of-search was given to magistrates and tavern keepers to see what and how much liquor any householder might have

Four shillings a quart was fixed as the value of liquors in the Colony. Every person having liquors in his possession was required to make return to the Town Clerk that a record might be made. An excise tax of five shillings per anker (10 gallons) was ordered. Licenses were ordered to be granted to two ordinaries, or houses of entertainment in each town, the houses to be marked by "a convenient signe, at ye most perspicuous place of ye said house." Later it was ordered that no house of entertainment should suffer any person to tipple after nine o'clock at night. No liquors could be smuggled into any town to avoid the excise tax, in penalty of forfeiture of the whole invoice. Excise officers were appointed in each town to see that the law was duly executed. In 1661 it was ordered that it was not lawful for any person to retail wine or liquors who did not keep one bed at least and victuals for the entertainment of strangers and other guests.

While legislators, legislation and courts of justice constitute the mechanism of civil society in the Colony, we are able to look into internal conditions of Colonial life in the four towns that constitute the Plantation through the medium of important correspondence from the pens of Sir Harry Vane, Oliver Cromwell, Gregory Dexter and Mr. Williams.

In 1651 Dr. Clarke, William Dyre and Roger Williams went to London, the first two to secure the revocation of the Coddington Commission, Mr. Williams to make the application of the Charter of 1644 to the mainland settlements. Dyre returned the next year to report the dissolution of the Coddington government, Mr. Williams remained in London until 1654. Writing to Gov. John Winthrop, Jr., of Connecticut, he says: "It pleased the Lord to call me for some time, and with some persons to practice the Hebrew, the Greek, Latin, French and Dutch. The Secretary of the Council (Mr. Milton) for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages. Grammar rules begin to be esteemed a tyranny. I taught two young gentlemen, a Parliament man's son, as we teach our children English, by words, phrases and constant talk." The Sadlier correspondence took place during this period of Mr. Williams' absence. Mr. Williams returned by sail to Boston, bringing a passport from the Council of State for a safe passage to Providence. In the official letter regretful reference is made to the "distance" between the Bay and Plantations people. In return for the courtesies of the Bay Colony, Mr. Williams wrote the remarkable letter to the General Court of Massachusetts as to the relations of the Colonies and the Indians and the importance of maintaining peace and friendship with the Narragansetts and allied tribes. This letter is a valuable evidence as to Mr. Williams' peace spirit and policy.

The letter of Sir Harry Vane, brought by Mr. Williams and undoubtedly suggested by him and the reply by Gregory Dexter, demand brief

attention. Vane's letter is sent "to the inhabitants of Providence Colony by the hands of Roger Williams." Mr. Williams had been the guest of Vane at Belleau, his country seat, enjoys the confidence of the statesman, reveals to him particulars as to social and civil matters in the New England Colonies, and in detail, the goings on at Boston, Providence and Newport. Mr. Williams' version of conditions is accepted and Vane's exposures and criticisms are but a transcript of Mr. Williams' mental and judicial attitude and fully approved by him. While all the Colonial plants were subject to discords and divisions, Aquidneck at this time had no special distemper, as the Coddington government was now a matter of ancient history. We may assure ourselves that the aim of Sir Harry Vane was to silence, if possible, the murmurings at Providence against Mr. Williams, and to quell the civil disturbances that were at times so violent. Heroic treatment must be administered to savage diseases, and this letter of Vane's is of the nature to save or destroy the body civil. Yielding, in his retirement, to the request of "my kinde friend and ancient acquaintance," and "out of the Christian love I bear for you," Sir Henry writes: "How is it that there are such divisions amongst you? Such headiness, tumults, disorders and injustice? The noise echoes into the ears of all, as well friends as enemies, by every return of shippes from those parts. Is not the fear and awe of God amongst you to restraine? Is not the love of Christ in you, to fill you with yearning bowells, one towards another, and constrain you not to live to yourselves, but to him that died for you, yea, and is risen again? Are there no wise men amongst you? No public selfdenying spirits, that at least, upon the grounds of public safety, equity and prudence, can find out some way or means of union and reconciliation for you amongst yourselves, before you become a prey to common enemies, especially since this state, by the last letter from the Council of State, gave you your freedom, as supposing a better use would have been made of it than there hath been. Surely, when kind and simple remedies are applied and are ineffectual, it speaks loud and broadly the high and dangerous distemper of such a body, as if the wounds were incurable. But I hope better things from you, though I thus speak."

Vane suggests that commissioners might put a stop to "your growinge breaches and distractions, silence your enemies, encourage your friends and honor the name of God, which of late hath been much blasphemed by reason of you."

A reply quickly follows from the ready pen and versatile mind of the prince of letter-writers of Providence, Gregory Dexter. For adroitness and skill in parrying the sharp strokes of Vane's quill, this letter is a master-piece in its sophistry and special pleading for the town of Providence, an innocent, lamb-like sufferer, it is a match with the double deal-

ing of William Dyer, his Newport cotemporary. Note the method of the diplomat of Providence in his note to Vane, Aug. 27, 1654. "Aggrieved at your late retirement from ye helme of publicke affairs." "We rejoice to reap the sweete fruits of your rest in your pious and lovinge lines most seasonably suit us." (sic). "Thus, Sir, your sun, when he retires his brightness from ye world, yet from ye very cloud we perceave his presence and enjoy some light and heat and sweet refreshinge." "So noble and true a friend to an outcast and despised people." "We reaped ye sweete fruits of your constant loving kindness and favour towards us." "Oh, Sir, whence then is it that you have bent your bow, and shot your sharpe and bitter arrowes now against us? Whence is it yet you charge us with divisions, disorders, &c." Note the agreement of "ye sweet fruits," and "pious and lovinge lines" with "your sharp and bitter arrowes" shot "against us." Now comes the parrying blow. Providence is not the guilty party; it is Newport, when Coddington began to disturb "the compleate order of the Colony and, by lying, procured a monopoly of part of ye Colonie, *viz.*: Rhode Island to himselfe and so occasioned our general disturbances and distractions." And then Mr. William Dyer is introduced as a great disturber of the peace of the Colony, making him a partner with others of most unnecessary and unrighteous plunderings, both of Dutch and French and English. This bold stroke was aimed at Rhode Island for its offensive and defensive war against the Dutch at Manhattan, which Providence men opposed, and this, notwithstanding the fact, that Coddington was deposed by Williams, Dyer and Clarke, on the ground that he favored the Dutch and rendered them assistance in guns and ammunition.

We come now to this remarkable confession and illumination of social and civil affairs at Providence. "Yet we may not lay all the load upon other men's backs, possibly a sweete cup hath rendered many of us wanton and too active. For we have long drunk of ye cup of as great liberties as any people, yt we can hear of under the whole Heaven." Grateful for freedom "from ye iron yoake of wolfish bishops and their Popish ceremonies" and that "we have sitten quiet and drie from ye streams of blood split by ye warr in our native country" (as cowards who run from a brave fight usually do) "we have not felt ye new chains of ye Presbyterian tyrants" (of the Bay Colony); "nor (in this Colonie) have we been consumed with ye overzealous fire of ye (so-called) Godly and Christian magistrates. Sir, we have not known what an excise means. We have almost forgotten what tythes are; yea or taxes either to church or commonweale." Here we have in a nutshell the sum of the cupfull of "great liberties" of the people at Providence.

Gregory Dexter, in this remarkable bit of composition, is speaking for the whole town of Providence in 1654, nearly twenty years after the

occupation of the Moshassuck Valley by Roger Williams. It is an official rejoinder and rebuttal of Sir Harry Vane's charges. As Mr. Dexter is a most faithful friend of Mr. Williams, the letter must have received his personal approval as well as the approval of your "most humble servants, the Towne of Providence, in the Colonie of Providence Colonie, in New England. Gregorie Dexter, Town Clarke."

Let us note the several ingredients of "*ye cup of great liberties*" of which the people of Providence "*have long drunk.*"

FIRST, Freedom from the "iron yoaks of wolfish bishops" of the Church of England, "and their Popish ceremonies."

SECOND, Freedom from the "new chains of ye Presbyterian tyrants," the Puritan Church of the Bay Colony.

THIRD, Freedom from "ye overzealous fire of ye Godly and Christian magistrates." Mr. Williams wrote in 1638, that Providence could not endure "the face of magistracy" and there is no record of any civil officer as a town constable, until 1649. Freedom, indeed! Freedom from Sunday laws, freedom as to drunkenness and debauchery, freedom as to adultery and whoredom, freedom from all criminal laws and restraints, freedom for unlicensed consciences.

FOURTH, Freedom from excises. The first record of a tax on imports at Providence appears under date of June 2, 1656, when an excise tax was fixed on all wine and liquors.

FIFTH, No titles nor taxes either to church, town nor Commonwealth. The first tax of record in Providence was fixed April 27, 1649, when it was ordered that "a rate shall be levied and gather(ed), 3d for cows, 1d for swine and 1d for goats, for common charges by the constable of the Town."

Five items and five only constitute the contents of the "Cup of Liberty" from which Providence had drunk, with such perfect satisfaction and content for nearly two decades. No mention is made of the Cup of Civil and Soul Liberty in this inventory of Colonial freedom, for one clear and all-sufficient reason,—the people of Providence had never drunk from it. Even Mr. Williams, in the historic letter he wrote to the town of Providence, on his return from England, to which we shall refer later, said, "I have been charged with folly for that *freedom and libertie* which I have always stood for. I say *libertie and equality* in *lands and government*. The "LANDS AND GOVERNMENT" as administered in and by the Proprietary at Providence were the ideals of the freedom which Mr. Williams had set for himself and the community at Providence.

On March, 1655, Cromwell, Lord Protector, addressed a letter to all the towns of the Colony counselling them to proceed in their government according to the tenor of their charter, "taking care of ye peace and safety

of those Plantations, that neither through any intestine commotions, or forrage invasions, there doe arise any detriment or dishonor to this Commonwealth or yourselves." Concerning complaints that had reached the Protector that the Colony "abounddes with whoredom," a law was passed ordering each town to pass such ordinances against adultery as the town magistrates should think meet to suppress adultery and the solicitations leading to "ye assaultinge of a woman, tendinge to ravishment." The laxity of laws as to sexuality in England had made illicit intercourse and illegitimate births common in England and the freedom of sex relations became an easy habit in the early life of the Colonies, not only of the white population among themselves but also of white men with Indian women. To curb this evil, Massachusetts Bay Colony made adultery punishable with death, while Plymouth made such intercourse subject to heavy fine or public whipping of both parties. The Rhode Island law of 1647 made buggery and rape punishable with death, while adultery was subject to current English law and sentence. In 1665, Peter Tollman sought a divorce from his wife on the grounds of adultery. She confessed her guilt to the court and was sentenced to pay ten pounds and to be publicly whipped at Portsmouth and Newport. Little attention seems to have been given to this class of crimes in any of the Rhode Island towns, especially in those where "conscience liberty" approved of such sex freedom.

Perhaps the most remarkable revelation of the internal conditions at Providence is revealed in the letter of Mr. Williams to his "well beloved friends and neighbors" at Providence on his return from England. During his three years' absence, his enemies held sway in the town and, on his return, he met with a cool reception and this letter is a clear expression of an honest though a depressed spirit on account of the treatment he has received. "I am like a man in a great fog. I know not well how to steer. I fear to run upon the rocks at home, havinge had trials abroad. I fear to run quite backward as men in a mist doe, *viz.*: to keep up the name of a people, a free people, not enslaved to the bondages and iron yokes of the great oppressions of the English and barbarians about us, nor to the divisions and disorders within ourselves. What have I reaped of the root of being the stepping stone of so many families and townes about us, but grief and sorrow and bitterness. I have been blamed for parting with Moshassuck, and afterwards of Pawtuxet, which were mine owne as any man's coate upon his back." "It hath been told that I labored for a licentious and contentious people. \* \* \* This, and tenn times more I have been censured for, and at this present am called a traitor, by one partie, against the State of England for not maintainge the charter, and the Colonie; and it is said I am as good as banished by yourselves,

and that both sides wished that I might never have landed, that the fire of contention might have had no stop in burning. Indeed the words have been so sharp between myself and some latelie, that I even forced to say they might well silence all complayntes if I once began to complayne, who was unfortunatelie fetched and drawne from employment and sent to soe vast distance from my familie to do your work of a high and costlie nature for soe manie dayes and weeks and months together, and there left to starve or steal or beg or borrow." Mr. Williams continues to castigate the people of Providence for their "contentions of brethren," and to charge them with great ingratitude for the self-sacrificing services he has rendered. "Surely your charges and complaints, each against other, have not nor covered anything, as we use to cover the nakedness of those we love." Mr. Williams closes his long letter of lamentations by an appeal "for pacification and accommodation of our sad differences." All differences that cannot be settled by debate and mutual concession he advises to "offer to be judged and censured by four men" to be chosen by the parties in discussion. Our sympathies are strongly aroused by these pathetic utterances of a public servant, who, on his return from an important mission was received so coldly by both parties of his home town. His words seem like the lamentations of an old prophet of Israel, freed from the denunciations and judgments of the elder day. We get here an insight into Mr. Williams' mentality and force of character, but not on the side of admiration or even satisfaction. Returning from a three years' absence he finds his home people torn in pieces by social and civil discords. Fault finding and personal complainings are not the proper antidotes for such disorders. Firmness, courage and strong confidence do not take refuge behind such weak defences. It will be remembered that Mr. Williams suggested that he might "flee to little Prudence" to escape from the baleful influence of Gorton, and leave "poor Providence," as he often called it, to shift for itself. Fighting courage was not one of Mr. Williams' virtues. His defensive weapons, in the hours of danger and of doubt are compromise, compliance, surrender. His knighthood won its spurs on untenanted battlefields. *He was a Pacifist.* "The winter of 1654-5 was one of unusual turbulence in Providence," says Arnold. "Conscience liberty" had unrestrained expression. Ideas bordering on anarchy were freely uttered and Thomas Olney and others took up arms against the magistrates, under the pretext of a volunteer training. The persons involved were no less than Thomas Olney, Robert Williams, John Field, William Harris and others of that party. As an illustration of the spirit of "TRUTH AND FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE," so strongly emphasized by Mr. Williams, a paper was sent to the town authorities declaring "that it was blood-guiltiness, and against the rule of the Gospel to execute judg-

*ment upon transgressors against the private or public weal."* Here is a pernicious doctrine that "out-Herods Herod" and gives free indulgence to every crime outlawed by the Decalogue. The sad thing about it was that it was advocated by leading men in the Colony like William Harris, Thomas Olney, town clerk, and others of that type, and was a fruitage of the seed sowing of the noxious doctrine of "conscience liberty" in its absolution of sinners against law, on the ground of such liberty.

This position was taken by Gorton in his first advent, when Mr. Williams wrote of him "as bewitching & bemadding poor Providence with his unclean and foul censures of all the ministers of this country \* \* \* also denying all visible and external ordinances," etc. Judge Staples wrote, "The extent of the difficulties and disunions in the town may well be inferred from the following circumstance. Henry Fowler was warned to ye court to answer for his marriage without due publication and he pleaded yet ye divisions of the Towne were the cause of his so doeing ye Towne wanted a remission of his penalties."

At this time appeared the letter of Mr. Williams, defining, in a clear and orthodox fashion, the relation of soul liberty to law and magistracy. By it he controverts his earlier attitude, prior to his banishment, and affirms all that has been claimed for freedom under law, from the days of the Christian era, to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." Roger Williams, of 1654, now in a position to advise as to the making of a free state, has a new vision of things that are true, honest and of just report relative to loyalty and liberty. The whole letter is too precious a testimonial to the honesty of spirit and the conversion of heart of the Roger Williams of 1634 to omit it from Rhode Island history. It is a fitting rebuke to the anarchy of the twentieth century as it was a timely one to the anarchists of Providence of 1654. "Conscience liberty" gets its death blow at the hands of its most devoted friend and advocate. Mr. Williams has spent three years in the school of Vane, Cromwell and John Milton and has imbibed their wise teachings.

In 1657, Benedict Arnold was chosen Colonial President with Arthur Fenner, William Baulston, Richard Tew, and Randall Holden, Assistants. The chief event of the year was the impeachment of William Harris for high treason on charges presented by Roger Williams in a letter addressed to the General Court. As neither Harris nor Williams were present at the May session of the Court, a special session was called at Warwick, for July 4 to hear the case when the parties to the trial appeared. Harris was ordered to read to the Court such parts of his "Booke" as contained the supposed treasonable utterances, while Mr. Williams was ordered "to read over his charges" and his reply to the "Booke." John Wickes of

Warwick and John Easton of Newport were chosen to listen to the case "till aboute foure the clock this afternoone," and to draw up in writing their proposals and recommendations. Their report follows:

*"Concerninge William Harris, his Booke and speeches upon it:* We find therein delivered as for doctrine, having much bowed the Scripture to maintaine, that he that can say it is his conscience ought not to yield subjection to any human order amongst men. WHEREAS, The sayd Harris hath been charged for the sayd booke and words with High Treason; and inasmuch as ever being soe remote from England, cannot be soe well acquainted in the laws thereof in that behalfe provided, as the State now stands; though we cannot but conclude his behavior therein to be both contemptuous and seditious; we thought best therefore, to send over his writings with the charge and his reply to Mr. John Clarke, desiringe him to command the matter in our and the Commonwealth's behalfe, for further judgment as he shall see the cause requires; and in the meantime to binde the sayd Harris in good bonds to the good behavior until their sentence be known."

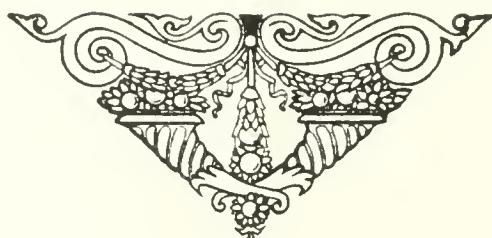
President Arnold, Recorder John Sanford, John Easton and Joseph Clarke, all of Newport, were chosen to present the case in full form to the English Council of State, through Dr. John Clarke, then in London. Harris's bond for £500 was placed in the hands of the Court, but was never referred to afterwards and no decision was ever rendered. Bitter hatred ever after existed between Williams and Harris and the people of Providence were divided for years into Harris and Williams parties. "Mr. Williams so disliked Mr. Harris that he would not write his name at length, but abbreviated it thus, W. Har.," says a biographer. Harris though not an anarchist in spirit, was in error. His philosophy of civil government would not stand the test of a Democratic Court or jury, but it was the logical conclusion of Mr. Williams' teachings and acts on "Conscience Liberty," a doctrine both licentious and anarchistic. The viper "High Treason" was warmed and nourished in Williams' bosom.

It was in 1657 that the Bay Colony asked our Colony to banish the Quakers who had found a harbor of safety at Newport. The reply was a gracious one, but firm in its defence of the Rhode Island principle of civil and soul liberty. As expressed almost twenty years earlier at Portsmouth and Newport, obedience to law and the duties of citizenship would be the tests of loyalty in Rhode Island, said President Arnold, but our organic law will not allow us to establish religious tests, thereby excluding any and all who differ from us, in creed and worship, while at the same time they are good citizens.

Benedict Arnold's presidency continued by annual elections until 1660, when he was succeeded for two years by William Brenton of Newport. Again in 1662, Arnold was again chosen President, holding the

office at the time of the reception and adoption of the Royal Charter in 1663. Cromwell's death as Lord Protector of England, occurred in September, 1658, and his son Richard assumed the head of the government until May, 1659. He was proclaimed Lord Protector by His "loyall subjects of Rhode Island" on the 11th of March, 1658-9, but the news of his recognition did not reach him before he had vacated the office, which he was incompetent to fill.

A twelvemonth passes, and Charles the Second was proclaimed king at Westminster, amid the rejoicings of the English people, May 8, 1660, entered London, May 29, 1660, and was crowned April 23, 1661. The Democracy of the short Protectorate of eight years is cut short by the death of Cromwell and a new monarch assumes the kingship and the throne made vacant by his father's death by the executioner's axe in 1649. "The King is Dead! Long Live the King!"



## CHAPTER XIX

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PROVIDENCE AND AQUIDNECK CONTRASTED





VIEW DOWN THE HARBOR BEFORE STATE PIER WAS BUILT



## CHAPTER XIX.

### PROVIDENCE AND AQUIDNECK CONTRASTED.

We have seen two independent settlements founded on Narragansett Bay in 1638. The town of Providence was founded by Roger Williams and his associates, at the head of tide-water, at a place called by the Indians, Moshassuck.

The Colony of Rhode Island was founded by William Coddington, John Clarke and their associates, on Aquidneck, an island, facing the Atlantic, at the mouth of Narragansett Bay and thirty miles south of Providence.

Each of these settlements was for a period of years, a distinct civil corporation, in no way related to the other, during the formative period of their existence. Each was in friendly relations with the other, but each held its own individuality, separate and apart from the other. It is absolutely necessary to keep these facts in mind in order to understand the early history of the Narragansett Bay peoples and to interpret the events in their true relation to civil and religious freedom. This new history of Rhode Island is written for the purpose of setting at rest, once and forever, the mental derangement growing out of the "Confusion of Tongues" as to the identity and clearly distinct personality, consciously manifest in early settlement on the Bay. The student of Colonial Plantings is called upon "to read, mark and inwardly digest" the historic facts relative to the two settlements.

In June, 1636, Roger Williams with four or five companions crossed the Seekonk and sat down on the east bank of the Moshassuck River, the others joined him, and for two years no definite action was taken by the Company, until, in the winter of 1637-38, Coddington and Clarke coming from Boston, and representing a large number of families seeking a new place for settlement, visited Mr. Williams to advise with him as to their future home. Their final decision was to purchase Aquidneck Island at the entrance of Narragansett Bay, and on March 24, 1638, Mr. Coddington received from Miantonomi, the deed of the island territory, paying therefore a fair money value, and on the same day and at the same place, Narragansett, now Wicford, Mr. Williams received the life estate of a large land area, between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet Rivers, as a free gift. Later Indian concessions to the *Providence Proprietary* extended the bounds north and west to include the territory to the east line of Connecticut Colony and to the south line of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the whole receiving the name PROVIDENCE. While there are scanty

records of the PROVIDENCE PROPRIETARY, there are none of the organization of a corporate body, called PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS. In fact no such organization ever existed as related to Providence alone or to any organized body or association of towns at the north end of the Bay. The terms *Providence Plantations* first appears in the Patent obtained by Roger Williams in 1644, in which the three towns, Providence, Portsmouth and Newport are named as constituting the Colony of "*Providence Plantations in the Narragansett Bay in New England.*" This title was the official name of the four towns, Providence, Warwick, Portsmouth and Newport, from 1647 to 1663, with the exception of the period of the withdrawal of the Aquidneck towns during the Coddington rule from 1651 to 1653. It is proposed, in this chapter, to consider and compare the leading features of the two settlements, *Moshassuck*, in the north, led by Roger Williams, and *Aquidneck*, in the south, led by Clarke and Coddington.

The Moshassuck settlement was made up of a body of people, mostly of Salem, Massachusetts, who, for various reasons, followed Mr. Williams in his banishment, hoping to better their condition in a new settlement. None had had any practical experience in town affairs; with the exception of Mr. Williams, all had little learning and small properties. None had a purpose of founding a town and most refused orderly town government, preferring individual freedom and licenses to the control of magistrates of law. There was no unifying force in the Moshassuck settlement and so diversified were the opinions and desires of the people that the personality of Mr. Williams was not equal to the task of harmonizing the settlers and preventing factional divisions and social strife.

The Aquidneck settlement was made up of a body of people well-educated and well-to-do, all from Boston, members of the First Puritan Church, and for a period of years, united in the support of town and church government. Many of the leading men had held principal offices in town and Colonial government in the Bay Colony. All had comfortable homes and were self-supporting in business. Allied in social, civil and religious affairs, acquaintanceship had flowed into good fellowship and unity of desire and purpose. Mrs. Hutchinson's Forum had clarified intellectual thought and spiritual life and intensified the love for civil and religious freedom. The visions of a State free from the narrowing conceits of the Puritan clergy was enlarged by honest debate and made possible in personal experience. A new Commonwealth is unconsciously forming. The winter of 1637-38 witnessed a remarkable exodus from Boston. A body of families, welded into one by a common experience of civil and ecclesiastical power and oppression, prepares to leave well established homes, the industries of family support, social and church rela-

tions and invested properties, in search of a new home, as yet unknown to them. Their leaders, the Moses and Joshua of their wanderings were Dr. John Clarke and William Coddington. Guided by a kind Providence they find a Promised Land on the Island of Aquidneck, at the mouth of Narragansett Bay. They purchase their lands of the Indian owners, enter into a compact to erect a town, towns and a State on the foundations of individual liberty in things civil and spiritual, as they had pledged to each other before their forced removal from their Boston homes. Sober, earnest and thoughtful men, it was no Utopia, no new Atlantis, no realization of a splendid dream, which they had at heart, but the establishment of the divine principle of authority on the common interest and common consent; the making, by a contribution from the free-will of all, a power which should curb and guide the free-will of each for the general good. In the establishment of a settlement, we find among the fifty or more families, unity, harmony, and a reverence for law human and divine. The centrifugal force of brotherhood and Christian fellowship binds all, in a common purpose, at Aquidneck.

It is difficult to state a common or general motive that led to the assemblage of people at Moshassuck between 1636 and 1640. A few, like Roger Williams, were banished for cause; others followed him sympathetically; some saw a new opportunity for possessing Indian lands in an unoccupied territory; none contemplated the founding of a new town or the setting up a new form of government. To most it was a venture, with nothing to lose and all to gain. Failure and a return to the neighborhood of the Bay Colony would not have been a disappointment or a source of tears to most. To Mr. Williams a return was impossible. His choice lay between a log cabin at Moshassuck or an Indian wigwam and a mission among the Narragansetts. As an opportunist he chose to wait, in poverty, in his cabin—and the opportunity came. Arnold states, "It was not the intention of Mr. Williams \* \* \* to become the founder of a State." Mr. Williams says, "I desired not to be troubled with English company, yet out of pity I gave leave to William Harris, the poor and destitute, to come along in my company. I consented to John Smith, Miller at Dorchester (banished also) to go with me, and at John Smith's desire, to a poor young fellow, Francis Wickes, as also to a lad of Richard Waterman's. These are all I remember." Mr. Dorr calls Mr. Williams and his little company "the first squatter sovereigns in the new world." For two years and more they were people without a home, possessions, laws or country. When persons of some financial or business ability arrived they drew apart from Mr. Williams' neighborhood. The Arnolds and Carpenters settled down at Pawtuxet, William Field and Harris at Mashapaug, Gorton and company at Pocasset. Each was chief

in his own chosen territory, a law unto himself in his own individual right.

The founding of a town calls for the union in action of a number of individuals, whose property qualifications justify expenditure of money and whose purposes include organization, principles of municipal procedure and corporate officers and the ownership of property, corporate or in severalty. Any assemblage of people lacking these qualifications have no claim to a municipality. Moshassuck was lacking in most of these particulars.

No English parish, in American towns, but of domestic and secular origin.—*No charter source.*

*Proposition One.* Roger Williams did not, in any recorded form, utter any distinct statement as to liberty of conscience, in relation to the settlers or the civil and business polity of the settlement at Providence, nor did he discriminate between conscience liberty and religious liberty in his work in attempting to organize civil society. By reason of this failure he created an "immoralism based on the idea that the individual has a right to express his personality, without in any way considering the claims of the community of which he forms a part." The will of the citizen was not expressed in any form except as related to lands and land ownership.

As a consequence men of disordered and depraved consciences found a ready asylum at Providence. One man's conscience allowed him to beat his wife frequently and cruelly. Another's conscience did not recognize the Christian Sabbath. Another's conscience forbade the payment of taxes. All refused magistracy, on grounds of conscience freedom. Stealing from the common lands of the Proprietors was sustained by the same principle. Every form of civil disorder was practiced and tolerated at Providence, on the ground that each man's conscience was the arbiter as to his conduct and that neither law nor magistrate should interfere. Judge Staples, the annalist of Providence, tells us that, in 1672, when for the first time, deputies to the General Assembly were required to take the oath of office, it was "to the great dissatisfaction of the good people of Providence, who protested against it" on the ground "it is contrary to the liberties granted to us in our charter, our charter not binding us to any such thing, and many persons scrupling such impositions to be imposed on them."

For a fuller revelation of the singular conduct of "distressed consciences" at Providence, even to fightings and deeds of violence, reference is made to Vol. IX., Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, entitled "The Proprietors of Providence and Their Controversies with the Freeholders," by Henry C. Dorr, 1897. For the purpose of testimony on most vital matters relating to the "immoralism" of the doc-

trine of "conscience liberty," as illustrated in the "lively experiment" inaugurated by Mr. Williams at Providence, it furnishes abundant proof that an asylum for weak, erring or diseased consciences is not a safe place to establish a Democracy, with full religious freedom. Such a class of people have in all times and in all places fostered discord, tumult, anarchy. "Poor Providence," as Mr. Williams often lamentingly called it, was not an exception to the law.

Here then, at Providence, was a turbulent community, committing deeds of violence, unchecked by laws, in no sense a State or Colony characterized by "organized, legalized morality," and all the product of a loose regard for rights of property or civil restraints. To call it a free Commonwealth would be a sad degradation of a noble title.

*Proposition Two.* In 1643, Mr. Williams, moved by the discords and strife at Providence, of his own motion, journeyed to London for a Patent or charter. Aided by Sir Harry Vane he obtained what is known as the Roger Williams Patent of 1644. We would expect that an eminent expounder of conscience liberty, by the aid of Vane would procure an instrument clearly guaranteeing such liberty. What do we find in the Patent of 1643-4? There is not a syllable referring to freedom of conscience, soul liberty or religious freedom, nor did it contain any grant of land. It was a simple document, in usual form, empowering the planters to rule themselves as English subjects, with the bounds of their civil jurisdiction "so vague, ambiguous and uncertain," as to invite occupation of the Narragansett Country by the Atherton Company of Boston on the east, and the Connecticut settlers on the west.

With an assumption of authority unparalleled in American history, Mr. Williams caused the Aquidneck Colony to be incorporated with the Providence Proprietary under the title of the Colony of Providence Plantations, when as yet Providence had no legal existence, save as a voluntary association of shareholders in a land corporation, with an annex of a community of "distressed consciences." As a matter of fact, Providence never had a distinct Colonial life, and no corporate life until 1649, thirteen years after its settlement by Mr. Williams and five companies.

The Aquidneck settlement was made at Pocasset (Portsmouth) by a large body of families, united by a solemn compact, signed by the principal leaders of the migration, and affirmed by all adult persons of the company. This compact was signed at Boston, before the emigrants set out in their search for a home, under date of March 7, 1638. The importance of this instrument as evidence of the motives and the purposes of the founders of Aquidneck justifies its introduction at this point of our discussion.

"WE WHOSE NAMES ARE UNDERWRITTEN DO HERE SOLEMNLY IN THE PRESENCE OF JEHOVAA INCORPORATE OURSELVES INTO A BODIE POLITICK AND AS HE SHALL HELP, WILL SUBMIT OUR PERSONS, LIVES AND ESTATES, UNTO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS AND TO ALL THOSE PERFECT AND MOST ABSOLUTE LAWES OF HIS GIVEN IN HIS HOLY WORD OF TRUTH, TO BE GUIDED AND JUDGED THEREBY."

Here we have, in March, 1638, before the purchase and possession of land by either Williams or Coddington, and more than six months prior to the formation of the PROVIDENCE PROPRIETARY AT MOSHASSUCK, the organization and incorporation of a civil State, "a Bodie Politick," at Boston, by the agreement of twenty-three representative men, led by William Coddington, John Clarke and others. The original copy of this remarkable document is preserved among the most valuable archival deposits of the State. The covenant is in the hand-writing of Dr. John Clarke, whose name stands next to Mr. Coddington's. Here then were set forth the foundations of a Commonwealth, established as the basic principles of the Old and New Testament Scripture teachings. Its language is as clean and intelligible as the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Sermon on the Mount. The basis of the town organization was the joint interest of individuals, commonly termed freemen or inhabitants, but sometimes planters, in a tract of land referred to indifferently as a town and as a plantation and their inhabitants were in the nature of stockholders in a modern corporation. As such they exercised a jealous oversight over the admission of new inhabitants, proprietors or stockholders. Its interpretation is to be found in the legislation that flowed from it and the institutions and government established by it. Historian Arnold, writing of the working of this new "Bodie Politick," a year after its establishment at Pocasset (Portsmouth), says, "Up to this time the government had been a pure Democracy. All acts had been passed in public meetings of the whole body. The judge and clerk had acted only as chairman and secretary of the assembled townsmen, by whom all laws had been passed, and all proceedings, whether legislative, judicial or executive, conducted." In order to understand the initial acts and procedure of legislation, the offices created, the officers elected and the unfolding and development of the new State, to avoid needless repetition, the reader must turn to the chapter relating to it.

We have seen elsewhere the initial acts of the Boston migration on Aquidneck, harmonizing with the compact made in Boston, prior to its departure. Vitality, coherency, unity, brotherhood and independency characterize all the movements on the Island for a series of years, excepting always the usual divergency of individual opinions on all questions of law and order in a democratic State. Without the freedom for individual views and expression, the community has no claim for civil equality.

At Moshassuck, the first act of permanent value, was the transfer of the Indian land title, by free gift, from Miantonomi to Roger Williams, March 24, 1638. On the demand of some of the settlers at Providence, Mr. Williams, for a consideration, sold twelve-thirteenths of his life estate to twelve of his associates, thereby forming a Proprietary of thirteen proprietors of equal interest in the whole estate. This proprietary was often called the *Town* and its meetings *Town Meetings*. All the proprietors were "*Maisters of families incorporated together into a towne fellowship.*" A majority of the proprietors could admit an inhabitant, who must be a married man with children. This private corporation, controlling all the land at Moshassuck made rules to govern its meetings and assumed the role of local government so far as such control harmonized with the major sentiment of the non-land-holding settlers, who were in the large majority at Moshassuck. An inhabitant or freeman, entitled to a vote in the proprietorship had an allotment of 100 acres of land. This right was carefully guarded. These had "equal fellowship to vote" with the thirteen original proprietors. Other persons were allowed to become townsmen as "twenty-five acres" or "quarter right men," and others still who had no land at all, neither of whom had a vote. Under date of 1645, twenty-eight "quarter right men" were received into Moshassuck. "The whole number of purchasers of both kinds never exceeded one hundred and one persons," is stated by Judge Staples, the last proprietor's clerk.

Briefly stated there was no civil government at Providence, no town organization until 1647, no magistrate to enforce order, no public expense, no proprietary taxation until 1647, no election by the people until 1651, no warranty deeds of land, no civil or criminal processes served and no officer to perform the service. As a result we find dissension, discord, tumults and affrays daily, and the asylum of refuge of "distressed consciences" became a distressed bedlam of discontents—almost anarchists. Mr. Williams withdrew from the field of strife and made a new home at his trading house at Narragansett, from 1645 to 1653.

It is evident that Mr. Williams had no definite plan of action as to the community he had gathered about him. Malecontents in Massachusetts, malcontents they continued to be at Providence. Wanting in organizing ability, disputatious and contentious in spirit, Mr. Williams became an alien among the people he had drawn together. His superior education and his influence with the chiefs of the Narragansetts were his main assets in commanding a measure of respect from those who knew him least. Even his Indian trading house proved a failure for want of the patronage of his swarthy friends along the Pequot trail. The volume especially relating to Providence discusses in detail the History of Early Providence and the chief actors therein.

The consummate act of the Aquidneck Settlements, was the union of the two towns, Portsmouth and Newport, under a Colonial form of government in 1640. Here, we see the enlargement and fulfilment of the Boston compact, promptly executed. The principle of a pure Democracy found expression in each of the original towns and then in an enlarged and united electorate of the combined freemen of the two towns in General Assembly, that met at Newport for the choice of general officers. The organization of the Colony was distinctly and indisputably legal, commercial and corporate and not religious, ecclesiastical or feudal. We believe that this election of Colonial officers at Newport, on the 16th of March, 1641, was the first democratic proceeding among civilized men, of a considerable body of people, for the ends of civil government. Not only did it choose officers and do all necessary things for setting the Colonial government machinery in operation, but the GENERAL COURT or Legislature, elected by it, and organized under it, was a "DEMOCRATIC, or *Popular Government*," when the "Body of Freemen" by a major vote could make "JUST LAWS" and "*depute from among themselves such ministers as shall see them faithfully executed between man and man.*"

If a clearer definition of a pure democratic state was ever made we have failed to find it. Still more the academic proposition of a democratic state was made a practical reality, on Aquidneck, in 1641. Yet more, the General Assembly declared "THAT NONE BEE ACCOUNTED A DELINQUANT FOR DOCTRINE." This was "THE RHODE ISLAND DOCTRINE," first enumerated at Newport, under Governor William Coddington as Chief Magistrate of the Rhode Island Colony, on Aquidneck. Still further, "a Manual Seale" was "provided for the State," \* \* \* "the Signet or Engraving thereof shall be a Sheafe of Arrows bound up and in the Liess or Bend, this motto indented: *Amor Vincet Omnia.*" Courts were established, magistrates chosen, a military system was organized, taxes were assessed and collected, a free school established, the tenure of landed properties was made perpetual by legal assignment, and all acts and laws were made necessary for the successful prosecution of an orderly government.

This was the Civil Commonwealth, with "full freedom in religious concerns," concerning which so much has been written, but it was not located at nor did it originate in Providence or in Providence Plantations. In its establishment, Roger Williams had no share, not even that of an advisory actor. There is no evidence that he was even consulted as to principles of formation and details of operation. At the very time that Rhode Island Colony was being formed the people at Providence were trying to establish a "*Plan of Arbitration*" to settle in-

testine troubles that threatened the life of the settlement, a plan so weak and inefficient that thirteen of the colonists wrote to the government of Massachusetts, praying them "of gentle courtesy and for the preservation of humanity and mankind," to consider their condition and to lend them "a neighbor-like helping hand" to enforce the execution of an award made by "eight men orderly chosen," against one of the inhabitants, in a civil matter. Providence was in a condition of anarchy, with no law, religion or government, in November, 1641, when an orderly town and Colonial government had been in successful operation since May, 1640, in the Rhode Island Colony on Aquidneck.

The time has come for the correction of an error, almost world-wide, that Roger Williams, at Providence, established the first government in the world wherein civil and religious liberty had therein full recognition and practical application, a claim never made by Mr. Williams, and never asserted until a century after his death. The comparative history of the two settlements, Moshassuck and Aquidneck, absolutely destroys the claim made in behalf of Mr. Williams and confers it upon the leaders and body of settlers at Portsmouth and Newport, of whom Dr. John Clarke was the well recognized intellectual and spiritual guide and statesman. Fortunately for the establishment of historic truth in the matter of the primacy of the principle involved, the lay mind has become liberally inclined to the claims of the Aquidneck Colony, while the denominational mind, in its support of the claims of Mr. Williams advocates, on the ground of his possible relation to the early Baptist Church at Providence, is virtually freed from a conscious or sub-conscious sentiment on the subject. To both classes of minds, in fact to all seekers after historic truth, there is a strong disposition "to hew to the line, even if the chips fly in their faces." With a judgment free from partisan bias, with a full knowledge of all the facts at issue with an acquaintance with the arguments used in support of the Moshassuck claim, with an ardent devotion to historic truth, and in the exercise of a conscience free from guile, I am sure that the final verdict of History will award the honor of establishing the first permanent Civil State among men wherein full democracy and full religious liberty dwell in harmonious union, on the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck, on Narragansett Bay.





## CHAPTER XX

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THE SETTLEMENT OF SHAWOMET







FALLS IN TEN MILE RIVER, AT HUNT'S MILLS

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE SETTLEMENT OF SHAWOMET.

As Roger Williams was the leading actor in the founding of Providence and Dr. John Clarke in the founding of Portsmouth and Newport, so Samuel Gorton stands as the founder of Warwick and the most commanding figure in determining the character of the people and in the establishment of a town government. Samuel Gorton was born in the year 1592, in the town of Gorton, England, now a part of the city of Manchester. Here he received his early education and his religious training was in the English church. In an address to Charles the Second he writes, "I drew my tenets from the breasts of my mother, the Church of England." While holding firmly all his life to the doctrines of that church, as to its practices he stood with the non-conformists of England and the Bay Colony. Gorton had received a classical education from able tutors and was well versed in English law. His library contained "the standard volumes in which the ancient statutes of his country were written." In literary education he was the equal of Williams, but both were surpassed by Clarke in the knowledge of the principles and administration of civil government. He had a clear and correct idea of soul liberty and was tolerant of all religious beliefs, though not in harmony with his own. "I yearned," he writes, "for a country where I could be free to worship God according to what the Bible taught me and as God enabled me to understand it." "Samuel Gorton," says Mackie, "was one of the noble spirits who esteemed liberty more than life, and, counting no sacrifice too great for the maintenance of principle, could not dwell at ease in a land where the inalienable rights of humanity were not acknowledged or were mocked at." "*I left my native country,*" he says, "*to enjoy liberty of conscience in respect to faith toward God and for no other end.*" Such words have the clear tones of an idealist of religious liberty.

Mr. Gorton's wife was a lady of education and refinement. Her maiden name was Mary Maplet, daughter of John Maplet, gentleman, of St. Martin's le Grand, London. Both families were wealthy for that day, and Samuel Gorton was the wealthiest of all the settlers in the Narragansett Bay country.

Gorton landed in Boston, with his family, in March, 1637, while the Wheelwright-Hutchinson controversy was at its height. Surprised at the conditions existing in the Puritan church-state, he made a brief stay at Boston and went to Plymouth, intending to make that colony his future home. But an eighteen months' sojourn, with his family, in the old Pilgrim town seemed enough for his freer spirit and bolder assertion of per-

sonal rights, when he departed, and, on his journey towards Shawomet, made a brief stay at Aquidneck. Here some trouble arose, which invoked a court trial, the result of which was so unsatisfactory to him, the defendant, that he styled his judge, Coddington, "a Just-Ass." As Aquidneck was not to his liking, through a somewhat trivial but quite unfortunate event, he moved again to Providence, not, however, without leaving in both communities clear proofs that Samuel Gorton was a virile man and an expert fighter with fists, tongue or pen. At Plymouth, Mr. Gorton asserted a broader democracy, and at Aquidneck the importance for a Royal Charter. As a matter of course, smaller matters entered into the personal quarrels in a controversial period of our local history. Into the portrayal of these it is not our purpose to enter.

At Providence, Mr. Gorton received scant welcome from either party—the Williams or the Arnold-Harris group. The knowledge of his doings at Boston, Plymouth and Newport had preceded him, and his coming, with Randall Holden, Sampson Shotten and John Wickes, expelled from Aquidneck for disloyalty, was the signal for the corporation at Providence to shut its doors very tight against the men who had disturbed the peace of other infant settlements. Nevertheless, Gorton found some friends at Providence who favored his stay, of whom we may name John Greene, John Warner, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Robert Cole, and probably Ezekiel Holliman. Concerning Gorton, Governor Winslow, of Plymouth writes:

From thence (Plymouth) hee went to Rhode Island, where hee began to raise sedition, and to make a party against the authority there; for which hee was apprehended and whipped, and so sent away. From thence (with some others whom hee had gathered to his part) hee removed to Providence, where Mr. Roger Williams then lived. Hee (with some others) opposed his sitting down there as an inhabitant, only in regard to his present distresse, they gave way for his abode for awhile. But being once housed, he soon drew so great a party to him, as it was beyond the power of Mr. Williams and his party to drive them out, or to rule them there; so as both parties came armed into the field each against the other, and had fought it out, had not Mr. Williams used means for pacification.

Under date of March 8, 1641, Mr. Williams writes:

Master Gorton having foully abused high and low at Aquednick, is now bewitching and bemadding poore Providence, both with his uncleane and foul censures of all the Ministers of this Country (for which myself have in Christ's name withstood him), and also denying all visible and externall ordinances in depth of Familisme, against which I have a little disputed and written, and shall (the Most High assisting) until death. As Paul said of Asia, I of Providence (almost) All such in his poyson, as at first they did at Aquednick, some few and myselfe his Inhabitation, and towne-priviledges, without reformation of his uncivill and inhuman prac-

tices at Portsmouth. Yet the tide is too strong against us, and I feare (if the framer of Hearts helpe not) it will force me to little Patience a little Isle next to your Prudence.

"Poor Providence," as Mr. Williams calls his town, is rent by three factions—Williams', Harris' and Gorton's. Conditions were waxing from bad to worse before 1640. Gorton's advent has added fuel to the fires of discontent and discord. A civil revolution is on and the contestants must meet in arms on an open field and draw blood before a truce and settlement.

The story must be told. It is too serious and the consequences of the struggle too important to pass it over in silence. Let us look into conditions existing in Providence that will enable us the better to understand the outburst of Mr. Williams and the angry, warlike relations of the settlers at Providence and the insurgent newcomers. We have seen that in October, 1638, Mr. Williams sold twelve-thirteenths of the Providence lands to twelve "Lo. (ving) Friends and neighbors." On the same day, to pacify the angry feelings of these "loving neighbors" he gives them twelve-thirteenths of his Pawtuxet lands—"A Sop to Cerberus." These Pawtuxet lands were held in high value by the purchasers. They were bounded by the Providence River on the east, a line running from Fox Hill (Fox Point) to and through Mashapaug Pond to Pocassett River, on the north; the Pocassett River on the west and the Pawtuxet River, from the mouth of the Pocassett to Providence River, on the south. This was a fine estate and was eagerly seized for occupation and farm purposes by William Arnold, Robert Coles, William Harris, William Field, William Carpenter and others. Although the settlers at Providence were few in number, they were resolute in will and determined in purpose as to one thing, that was the possession of land. In this outlandish scramble, there was a group of men who owned all the lands, the proprietors, and another group of young, unmarried men, who, without families, and with little money, could not get possession of lands. "Distressed in conscience" before coming to Providence, the distress was enhanced after coming, in finding that there was a land famine in the midst of thousands of unoccupied acres. Money, a family and "the major vote" of the proprietors were essentials to becoming an inhabitant at Providence. The proprietors, with Roger Williams at the head, held the key to the situation, and "distressed" or not, no man could enter the sanctuary at Providence without the above essentials. The little group of landed aristocrats, with feudal estates, was within; the larger and growing group of landless, helpless townsmen was without, clamoring for a share in the plantations. Even John Smith, "the miller," who came with Mr. Williams in 1636, was an outside claimant, though "distressed in conscience," and expelled from

the bay at the same time as Roger Williams. It was not until 1646-47 that he received a grant of valley land where his mill stood, although he had been the town miller several years. Thus the most useful man of the town, the man who built and ran the first factory on the plantations—a corn mill on the west bank of the Moshassuck—was not allowed a civil interest in the town and owned no lands for ten years. Mr. Williams' letter to Governor Winthrop, stating the grounds of his dislike to John Smith, is the key to unlock an apparent mystery. Nevertheless, John Smith, the miller of Moshassuck, came with Mr. Williams for the same reason, "*a distressed conscience.*"

But within the group of proprietors there is a breach between Mr. Williams and William Harris that lasted till the death of both—forty years later—and each had his followers in the proprietary. A third faction is found in such men as Robert Coles, Francis Weston, John Greene and Ezekiel Holliman—the last-named being the real founder of the first church at Providence. Of Coles it may be said that he was at times a member of each of several parties, his conduct evidently being regulated by the amount of New England rum he had drunk before his decision. It is of interest to note in the records of the Bay Colony how many times his name appears before the court for drunkenness, and on September 6, 1638, a fine of ten pounds was discharged by reason of the fact that, for conscience sake, he had departed for Providence to join Mr. Williams. Coles was the man that, for drunkenness committed at Roxbury, was disfranchised and was ordered to "weare about his necke, and soe to hange upon his outward garment, a D, made of redd cloath, and sett upon white; to contynue this for a yeare and not to leave it of at any tyme when hee comes amongst company, under the penalty of xls for the first offense & £5, & after to be punished by the Court as they thinke meete." On his arrival at Providence in 1638, Coles, who has a family and a considerable money, is welcomed by Mr. Williams and his name stands the fourth in the "Initial Deed" as a proprietor of the town lands.

Into the midst of the Providence Company, with no organized government, no laws and no officers, Samuel Gorton and Randall Holden, expelled from Aquidneck, come. Gorton's quick mind takes in the position at once and his impetuous spirit leads him to espouse the cause of the young, landless group, which stands opposed to Mr. Williams' policy. Gorton also applies for admission to the town-fellowship. In that desire, he is supported by John Greene, Robert Coles, Francis Weston and others, but a majority of the proprietary refuses him admission to that body. In a letter, written by William Arnold, dated May 25, 1641, quoted in "Documentary History of Rhode Island," Chapin, pages 129-133, may be found, in clear and very emphatic language, the reasons for refusing Gorton and his company membership in the town-fellowship. It was about this time

that Mr. Williams wrote the historic letter concerning Gorton's acts and influence at Providence, already quoted.

Samuel Gorton was a man whose purposes, once formed, were not easily shaken. He was well versed in law and could defend his rights by tongue, pen or gun. He saw the weaknesses and inadequacy of the Williams government. Even Mr. Williams had confessed all in his letter to Governor Winthrop, "Yet the tide is too strong against us and I feare it will force me to little Patience." What he, Gorton, could not accomplish by direct methods could be won by other means. He attempted two measures, both of which were, in a measure, successful. The first was to secure temporary occupation of territory by winning the friendly coöperation of some of the landed group. John Greene and Robert Coles were easily secured. Greene, a natural leader, and hatefully hostile to the Bay Colony, was dissatisfied with the Williams individualism and agnostic policy or no-policy at Providence. Cole had money, but no settled convictions. Ezekiel Holliman fell an easy prey to Gorton. He had drawn a house lot, singularly enough, adjoining the present grounds of the First Baptist Church, but he never built a log cabin on it, locating at Pawtuxet, and the Pawtuxet men, as a body, were not warm supporters of Mr. Williams, for were not William Harris and William Arnold and William Field of that body?

The second move of Mr. Gorton was to furnish leadership to the hitherto unguided, disaffected, landless young men. Williams was by nature a peace-maker. Gorton had not a drop of pacifist blood in his veins and he hated Roger Williams. The hatred was mutual, Gorton and Williams, like oil and water, had no affinity. Gorton was a simon-pure religionist—a mystic—a soul-liberty man throughout. He wanted to establish a true civil liberty community. He preached these doctrines to the young men, within the bounds, but without the corporate life of the town. By his marvellous persuasive powers Gorton went about "bewitching and bemadding poor Providence." He told the people they had no civil rights, no sovereignty, that Indian titles were of no value without the endorsement of the English Crown. Knowing the laws governing real estate titles, he told the people how valueless all their investments were, unless based on chartered securities. By such discussion fuel was added to the flames of a threatened destruction of Providence and the Plantations.

Having won the friendship of Coles, Weston and Greene, Gorton and his associates from Aquidneck were allowed to sit down at Papaquinapaug, on the north side of the Pawtuxet. Gov. Winslow wrote, "But being once housed, hee (Gorton) soon drew so great a party to him, as it was beyond the power of Mr. Williams and his party to drive them out, or to rule them there; so as both parties came armed into the field, each

against the other, and had fought it out, had not Mr. Williams used means for pacification." Gov. Winthrop wrote concerning the same event: "Those of Providence, being Anabaptists, were divided in judgment; some were only against baptizing of infants; others denied all magistracy and churches, etc., of which Gorton, who had lately been whipped at Aquiday, as is before mentioned, was their instructor and captain. These being too strong for the other party, provoked them by injuries, so as they came armed into the field, each against the other, but Mr. Williams pacified them for the present."

The story of this uncivil riot at Providence, which occurred on the 15th of November, 1641, as told by William Field, in which Samuel Gorton and his party at Providence were active participants, is an impressive illustration of the quality of civil liberty and democracy established by Roger Williams.

It seems that Francis Weston, who came to Providence with Ezekiel Holliman "was found liable to pay or make satisfaction in cattle or commodities" for £15. Field and associates say: "When we went, orderly, openly, and in warrantable way to attach sum of the sayd Francis Weston's cattle, to drive them to the pound, to make him if it wer possible to make satisfaction, which Samuel Gorton and his company getting notice off came and quarrelled with us in the street, and made a tumultuous hubbub, and although for our parts we had beforehand most principally armed ourselves with patience, peaceable to suffur as much injury as possibly bee borne to avoyd all sheding of blood. Yett som few drops of blood wer shedd on either side, and after the tumult was partly apeased and that wee went on orderly into the corne field, to drive the said cattle, the said Francis Weston, came furiously running with a flayell in his hand, and cryed out Help Sirs help, Sirs, they are going to steale my cattle and soe contd criing till Randall Holden, John Greene and some others came running, and made a great outcry and halloeing, and crying, theeves, theeves; stealing cattle, stealing cattle, and soe the whole number of their desperat company came riotously running and soe with much striveing and driving, hurried away the cattle, and then presumptuously answered they had made a rescue and that such should bee their practice, if any men at any time, in any case, attach anything that was theirs."

This statement is a quotation from a letter "To the Honour'd Governor of Massachusetts, Together with the Worshipful Assistants, and our loving Neighbours there," dated Providence, Nov. 17, 1641, and signed by William Field, William Harris, William Carpenter, William Wickenden, William Reynolds, Thomas Hopkins, Hugh Bewitt, Joshua Winsor, Benedict Arnold, William Man, William Hunkings, and Robert West. This letter is an appeal to the Bay Colony "for the preservatione

of Humanity and mankinde to Consider our Conditione and lend us a neighbour-like helping hand and send us such assistance, our necessity urges us to be troublesome unto you to help us to bring them to satisfaction, and ease us of our burden of them." (*Documentary History of Providence*, pp. 134-137). To this urgent request for assistance, the Bay answered that they could not render aid or protection unless "they did submit themselves to some jurisdiction, either Plimouth or ours." What followed later will appear in another connection.

Soon after the "Hubbub" on the north side of the Pawtuxet River, Samuel Gorton and his followers left the Pawtuxet Purchase and settled on land of Robert Coles, on the south side of the Pawtuxet. This land was purchased of Soccononoco, a sub-sachem of the Narragansetts, by Mr. Williams and sold by him to Coles, Jan. 1, 1639. This sale of Coles was confirmed by Canonicus and Miantonomi, Feb. 10, 1641, and by him (Coles) sold to Gorton. But Gorton and his associates were ill at ease in the neighborhood of the Plantations. While at Pawtuxet, Gorton wrote a long letter to the Bay Colony rebuking it for its sins and shortcomings, concluding with, "Countrymen (we can but call you so) though we find your carriage to be far worse than the Indians."

Gorton had spent six years in New England, and had tested the Puritan theocracy of Boston, the Pilgrim liberalism in Democracy at Plymouth, the broader civil and religious freedom of Aquidneck, and the narrower policy and unlicensed liberty of the Plantations. None of them are suited to this "most strenuous, the most irrepressible of all the dissenters from Massachusetts Puritanism,—in other words the most stentorian-voiced of all the New England heralds of toleration." The governments of Plymouth had banished Gorton for heresy and sedition, Aquidneck had whipped and banished him for setting at defiance all government, magistracy and courts of justice, Providence calls him "a railing and turbulent person," "a ring-leader unto the breach of peace," etc., etc., and refuses him membership in the civil community. Gorton speaking for himself, says: "We thought it meet for the possession of our peace, together with the compassion we had for our wives and little ones, to leave the houses and the rest of our labors lying near unto these (Arnolds, Cole and Carpenter) their pretended subjects and remove to territory where there could be no claim thereto or pretense to any." Gorton was advised that some in the Bay Colony intended to take his life if he staid in New England, and was urged to join the Dutch in New York, but he refused to go under the government of any foreign prince, "as he had neither been false to his King, nor country, nor to his conscience."

During his stay at Providence, Gorton had undoubtedly carefully surveyed the lands on the south, with a fine frontage on Sowams or

Narragansett Bay. It was a most attractive territory, which, once possessed, would furnish to him and his associates an opportunity to show before men their conception of a civil state, based on freedom in religious opinions and worship. The Indians called the lands Shawomet. Its bounds were from Copassuattuxett Cove "uppon the west syde of that part of the sea called Sowhames Bay," \* \* \* "and the outermost point of that neck of land called Shawhomett;" "in a straight line westward twenty miles." Its modern bounds are from Pawtuxet Falls to Warwick Neck Light, and twenty miles inland to the Connecticut line, including the greater part of the present towns of Warwick and Coventry. The purchasers were Randall Holden, John Greene, John Wickes, Francis Weston, Samuel Gorton, Richard Waterman, John Warner, Richard Carder, Robert Potter, Sampson Shotten, and William Wuddall. The deed was signed on the 12th of January, 1643, by Miantonomi, chief sachem of the Narragansetts and witnessed by Pumham, the local sachem of Shawomet. The sum paid was 144 fathoms of wampum. The cost in United States currency would be about \$175. The Indian deed of Potowomut was executed July 13, 1654 in favor of Randall Holden and Ezekiel Holliman. This point of land, though physically detached from Warwick is now a part of that town.

The sale of the large territory of Shawomet to Gorton and his associates by Miantonomi was very offensive to the magistrates of the Bay Colony as well as to the Commissioners of the United Colonies. The hazy claims of Massachusetts to the Narragansett lands, and the troubles at Providence, growing out of the revolt of the Pawtuxet purchasers, emboldened the Bay to make a new claim for the possession of Warwick and to charge Miantonomi with treason to that colony, "in mischievous plots to roote out the Body of the English Nation, purchasing the ayde of all the Indians by guifts, threats and other allurements to their pty." This bitter and unreasonable prejudice against Miantonomi was cherished by the Colonial Commissioners, of whom Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts was president. While the Shawomet sale is not mentioned in the accusations against the sachem, it was well understood that this act lay at the bottom of the charges against the life of the sachem.

The settlement at Shawomet was begun late in 1642, after the "Hub-bub" at Pawtuxet, when Gorton and a few others, including John Wickes and Randall Holden, located on the Indian lands at the head of Warwick Cove. After the purchase in 1643 they formed an association for civil government by arbitration and adopted a body of rules or "Town Orders," which they agreed to observe. They chose officers to carry on their government as outlined in their agreement. Gorton and his little band who had begun to build their cabins at Warwick Cove found themselves in a

"tight fix." Pumham, the local sachem of Shawomet, denied having given consent to the sale of that territory and he with Socononoco, an associate sub-sachem, submitted themselves and their lands to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts Colony. Massachusetts accepted the control of the territory and the protection of the Indians at Shawomet, thereby supporting the claim that the local chiefs had land rights superior to the rights of Canonieus and Miantonomi. This surrender occurred June 22, 1643, and gave to the Bay Colony the pretext, at least, of control over the territory of Shawomet. The Arnolds, Carpenter and Cole, following the appeal of the Pawtuxet purchasers, had already submitted themselves and their territory to the Massachusetts government, throwing off their allegiance to Providence, of which they were at that time proprietary inhabitants. That event occurred in 1642, and by it and the Pumham-Socononoco submission, Massachusetts assumed control of a portion of the Pawtuxet Purchase and the whole of Shawomet, from the Pawtuxet River on the north to the Greenwich Bay on the south. Gorton had been refused admission into Providence by the Proprietors, had been driven from Papquinapaug, and was meditating planting at Shawomet, when the Bay Colony issued the following warrant, dated the 28th of the 8th, 1642, sending it to the Gortonages by their new officer at Pawtuxet, William Arnold:

Massachusetts to our neighbors of Providence:

Whereas William Arnold of Pawtuxet and Robert Cole, and others, have lately put themselves and their families, lands and estates, under the protection and government of this jurisdiction, and have since complained to us, that you have since (upon pretence of a late purchase from the Indians) gone about to deprive them of their lawful interest, confirmed by four years possession, and otherwise to molest them. We thought good, therefore, to write to you on their behalf to give you notice that they and their lands, &c., being under our jurisdiction, we are to maintain them in their lawfull rights. If therefore you have any just title to anything they possess, you may proceed against them in our Court, where you shall have equall justice. But if you shall proceed to any violence, you must not blaim us, if we shall take a like course to right them.

JO. WINTHROP, Governor,  
THO. DUDLEY,  
RI. BELLINGHAM,  
INC NOWELL.

Gorton writes accusing Massachusetts of persecution, "of having former experience abundantly of their unkind and inhuman dealing with us, yea, towards our wives and children, when ourselves were sometimes in banishments, and sometimes in prison, and irons (by them) before." He charges the authorities with a purpose "to take our lives" as well as

"lively hood," claims their removal to another part of Narragansett Bay, "where none of the English nor other nations had anything to do, but only Indians, the true natives, of whom we bought a parcell of land, called Shaw-omet, not only of Myantonomy, chief sachem or prince of those parts of the country, but also with the free consent of the inhabitants of the place." Gorton denies the jurisdiction of the Bay Colony, claimed under the Pumham submission of persons and property, and appeals "to the laws and government of this kingdom of England unto which we ever willingly acknowledge ourselves to be loyal subjects, and therefore could not allow ourselves to be intrenched upon by our fellow subjects, further than the laws of our King and State doth allow." In the spring of 1643, Gorton and a few other purchasers took up land on the east shore of Warwick Cove and began the settlement of the Shawomet Purchase, clearing the land of heavy timber, building log cabins and planting corn. An eventless spring and summer at the new plantation are followed by an eventful autumn, as the records show. The Gortonoses, as they were called by the Indians, were not in good repute by the chiefs and natives of Shawomet, nor by the great majority of English settlers at Pawtuxet and Providence. The Arnolds, William and Benedict, who have submitted to the government of the Bay Colony, are made local officers of peace at Pawtuxet, and, earlier or a little later, bought lands, a mile in width, on the south side of the Pawtuxet River, as far west as Toskeunke (Pontiac), holding titles from Socononoco, the Pawtuxet sub-chief, who, with Pumham, had already given themselves and their lands to the Bay Colony, probably at the instance and under the influence of the Arnolds, and Carpenter and Rhodes, sons-in-law of William Arnold. Gorton and his friends are painfully conscious of the unneighbly attitude of their nearest neighbors at Pawtuxet and Providence and of the fixed purpose of the Bay Colony to dispossess them of their Shawomet estate. Gorton relates that a rumor has come to them that "Massachusetts was sending out an army of men to cut us off, \* \* \* having show of nothing against us, but only our Religion." He also states that Pumham and Socononoco have been influenced by the Massachusetts "Agents," meaning the Arnolds, to withdraw their allegiance from their "lawfull and natural Prince Myantonomy" and become subjects of Massachusetts.

On the twelfth of September, 1643, a warrant was issued by the General Court, at Boston, directed to "Our Neighbors, Master Samuel Gorton, John Wickes, Randall Holden, Robert Potter, Francis Weston, Richard Carder, John Warner, and William Waddle," in which it is declared that two Indian sachems, subjects of that Colony, have complained "of some injurious and unjust dealing, toward them by your selves," and calling

them to attend a hearing of the matter at Boston, safe conduct for "free egress & regresse" being promised. The messenger, who brought the paper, received a verbal reply from Mr. Gorton, stating that the Shawomet planters did not recognize the jurisdiction of any, "but only the state and government of old England, who only had right unto us, and from whom we doubted not but in due season we should receive direction, for the well ordering of us in all civil respects." The following week, Samuel Gorton addressed a characteristic letter "to the great and honoured Idol Generall now set up in the Massachusetts." This letter is one of the best specimens of the polemic literature of that period. Its logic is keen, its sarcasm cutting. In it appears the bold, defiant attitude of the townsmen and their chivalrous sentiments for the protection of their women and their born and unborn babes. The letter breathes defiance to their Indian accusers and rehearses their villainies, committed on the property and families of the accused. The metaphysical idealist is lost in the consummate pleader for human rights and respect for ultimate sources of justice. The Bay Colony is not spared the rod of correction for refusing English subjects inalienable rights and for fraudulent claims for civil jurisdiction over a foreign territory. Gorton's letter is certainly a master weapon both of offensive and defensive warfare, and it is no wonder that it stirred even the dispassionate Winthrop to anger and the Council of the Colony to plan a speedy revenge. Three broad charges now confront the Shawomet defenders:

1. Their reproachful and reviling speeches of the government and magistrates of Massachusetts.
2. Their reviling language against magistracy itself and all civil power.
3. Their blasphemous speeches against the holy things of God."

It is evident that a reverend Massachusetts heresy-hunting theologian wrote the accusations.

September 19, 1643, a notice was sent to Shawomet that they would soon send commissioners "to lay open the charges against you and to hear your Reasons and Allegations, and thereupon to receive such satisfaction from you as shall appeare in justice to be due." A guard was also to be sent, "for their safety against any violence, \* \* \* or to right ourselves and our people, by force of arms." Benedict Arnold of Pawtuxet advised the movements of the Massachusetts peace embassy, consisting of the Commissioners, Captain George Cooke, Captain Humphrey Atherton and Edward Johnson, and a body of forty soldiers. While on their way to Shawomet, Gorton sent to the Commissioners a message that if they came "in way of neighborhood and friendship" they would be welcome, but they were warned "not to set foot upon our lands in any

hostile way." The letter was one of friendship towards friends and of courageous defiance towards an enemy. "Mistake us not \* \* \* if you come to treat with us in ways of equity and peace (together therewith, shaking a rod over our heads in a band of soldiers) be you assured we have passed our childhood and nonnage in that point, and are under commission of the great God, not to be children in understanding, neither in courage, but to quit ourselves as men." The reply of the Commissioners indicated that they had come on an errand of mercy "to preserve their lives and liberties" from "eternall ruine of them and theirs," since an evil spirit had possessed one or two of them, leading to "monstrous" and "desperate evils." The embassy replied, hoping to bring them to repentance, but, in case of failure, "we shall looke upon them as men fitted for the slaughter." This message so frightened the women and children that they fled from their cabins, some to the woods, others to the Pawtuxet planters or to the Indian wigwams, for safety. The wives of John Greene and Robert Potter died from fright and exposure. While Mr. Gorton was conducting his wife, then great with child, to a boat, he spied the soldiers in the woods, calling out to them to keep out of the range of the muskets of the settlers in his block-house, which they had fortified for defense. A parley between the Shawomet men and the Boston party was proposed and after some debate was acceded to, and four Providence men, presumably Chad Brown, Thomas Olney, William Field and William Wickenden, were witnesses to the interview. The Boston men stated that the Shawomet men "had done some wrong unto certain of their subjects," presumably Pumham and others of the Shawomets, that they held blasphemous errors of which they must repent or be carried to Boston for trial or be put to death by the sword, and their property seized to defray the charges of the Commission. The Shawomet men refused to yield to the unreasonable and unwarranted demands of the Commissioners and proposed to appeal to "the honourable State of England" in all things charged against them. This plan the Boston men refused to accept, when Gorton and his little band offered to submit the whole business to arbitration, "by indifferent men, mutually chosen in the countrey, ingaging our goods, our lands & our persons to make full satisfaction for anything that could be brought in or appeare against us." This plan seemed so reasonable to Captain Cooke and the rest that a truce was agreed upon and a messenger was sent to Boston to learn the views of Governor Winthrop and the Council. The four Providence men, witnesses to the parley, wrote to Gov. Winthrop, entreating him to accept the proposal of arbitration. Had this plan been adopted a great injustice would have been averted and a Colonial crime avoided.

The Providence men, with Chad Brown at the head, cannot be accused of an excess of friendship towards Gorton for had he not "bemadded

poor Providence" of late, and yet they wrote, "Oh, how grievous would it be (we hope to you) if one man should be slaine, considering the greatest monarch in the world cannot make a man, especially grievous seeing they offer terms of peace." In this letter, the Providence men recited the charges of the Commission and the replies of the Shawomet men, assuring the Bay Council of the honesty and honor of the accused and hoping that "so faire Propositions \* \* \* will worke your affections to the utmost end of preventing blood spilling." The Commissioners also wrote to their government advising the acceptance of the Shawomet proposal. Gorton relates that during the truce, while the messenger was on his journey to and from Boston, the soldiers broke into their houses, took away writings from their desks, took their bedding for the soldiers, and killed their cattle for themselves and the Indians with them. They also insulted and assaulted some friends who had come to their aid during the truce, firing muskets at or near them as they left in their boats.

The messenger, carrying the message of the Commission and the letter of the Providence party, reached Boston while the Committee chosen by the General Court were in session, discussing the event of the murder of Miantonomi. This Committee was a large one, consisting of the Governor and other general officers of the Bay and the Deputies of Boston, Charlestown, Cambridge, Roxbury and Dorchester, of which Governor John Winthrop was chairman. It was a custom in the Bay Colony to call in the ministers to advise with committees on important Colonial affairs, and Winthrop tells us that "calling into us five or six of the elders who were near at hand we considered of the motion." It is worth our while to note the distinguished men who sat in Council to deliberate and decide the Shawomet proposal. John Winthrop, the "worshipful friend" of Roger Williams, Governor of the Bay, presided. His son, John Jr., later Governor of Connecticut, sat by his side. John Endicott of Salem was Deputy Governor. Thomas Dudley and Richard Bilingham, the three chosen governors later, sat in the court. Other great names were Richard Saltonstall, Simon Bradstreet, Rev. John Wilson, Increase Nowell, Rev. John Cotton, Israel Stoughton, William Pinchon. These, with a dozen or more deputies, constituted a court of no small magnitude for the consideration of a case involving questions, colonial, civil, ecclesiastical and military. No question of so much importance had hitherto occupied the attention of the magistrates and elders of Massachusetts Bay. The questions involved were these:

- a. Has the Bay Colony rights at Shawomet, superior to and subversive of the purchasers of Shawomet from Miantonomi?
- b. Have the Shawomet planters violated any laws of civil procedure which the Bay Colony has any right to consider or regulate?

c. Can an ecclesiastical or theological tenet or expression of a non-resident of the Bay, though contrary to the opinions of the magistrates and elders of the Bay, be justifiably reviewed or punished by the Bay?

d. Is a commission of a military nature a peace-making or a war-making force intended by arms to terrorize or destroy the Shawomet settlement?

e. Is not the Shawomet proposal a just, reasonable and proper way of settlement of any and all matters affecting the relations of the Bay Colony and the Shawomet Plantation?

f. Is arbitration and an English Referendum or the Sword the Christian way of settlement of a disputed claim?

These and other considerations were involved in the communications sent from Shawomet on October the second, 1643, to the Grand Committee of the Bay, in session at Boston. This Colonial-clerical body attends at once to the message. The gravity of a situation involving bloodshed and civil war would seem to demand days and weeks of consideration, discussion, prayer for Divine guidance. But, "the King's business demands dispatch" as does the Bay's. "Delay is dangerous" and in a few hasty hours, in a single day, this body of eminent men in Church and State have returned their solemn and unanimous verdict as to Shawomet and the course of action to be taken. Let the "worshipful" Governor Winthrop, President of this Council of the Bay speak, under date of October third, 1643, the day following that on which the communications from Shawomet were dispatched to Boston. He addresses his letter to "NEIGHBOURS AT PROVIDENCE," Chad Brown and others at Shawomet. The letter is too long to be quoted, but a summary of it in Governor Winthrop's Diary sets forth the judicial and judicial attitude of the Bay. He says:

We agreed that it was neither seasonable nor reasonable, neither safe nor honorable, for us to accept of such a proposition;

(1) Because they would never offer us any terms of peace before we had sent our soldiers.

(2) Because the ground of it was false, for we were not parties in the case between the Indians and them, but the proper judges, they being all within our jurisdiction by the Indians and English their own grant.

(3) They were no state, but a few fugitives living without law or government, and so not honorable for us to join with them in such a course.

(4) The parties to whom they would refer it unto were such as were rejected by us and all the governments in the country, and besides, not men likely to be equal to us, or able to judge of the cause.

(5) Their blasphemous and reviling writings, etc., were not matters fit to be compounded by arbitrament, but to be purged away only by repentance and public satisfaction, or else by public punishment.

And lastly, the commission and instructions being given them by the General Court (the Bay) it was not in our power to alter them.

The messenger returned from Boston, probably on Wednesday, Oct. 4, with orders to the Commissioners to proceed in the execution of their instructions, as the proposal for arbitration had been dismissed. The truce was now at an end, with a refusal to continue the parley and an order to the Providence men not to hold further intercourse with the Gortonians, who were now gathered in Gorton's house, which had been fortified and made ready for defence. The first act of the soldiers was to seize eighty head of cattle and other stock and property belonging to the settlers and turning all over to William Arnold of Pawtuxet, now a subject of the Bay Colony. The siege of the Gorton log-house fort was begun on Thursday, October 5th, and continued until Sunday, October 8th, the soldiers firing musket shot at the Gorton citadel, but injuring no one of the occupants, who had not fired a single shot at their assailants. In order to show their allegiance to the government of England, the English colors were hung out, at which the Bay soldiers shot more violently, shooting the colors, through and through, many times.

On Sunday an attempt was made to set the garrison house on fire, which failed. The Commissioners sent to Boston for more troops. While the soldiers were drawing nearer the castle, four days had passed and Gorton saw that he could not escape nor long hold out as against so unequal a force, when he sought a parley with the enemy and consented to go to Boston with the Commissioners provided they could go as "free men and neighbors," and not as captives. Captain Cooke consented and seemed joyful that the siege had come to an end. Gorton says, "the Captain desired to see our house, which request we lovingly embraced thinking he intended to refresh himself and his soldiers with such provisions as we had." Contrary to agreement, Cooke seized the arms of the defendants, and treated them as captives, leaving the house and goods to be pillaged by the Indians. He also directed the soldiers to punish the captives if they made any trouble or attempted to escape on the journey to Boston. Besides the cattle, swine and goats seized, the soldiers took all the corn and other provisions which the settlers had provided for the support of their families.

The victorious army entered Boston in triumph, with their captured men and booty, on Friday, October the 13th, 1643, and were at once jailed to await their trial. A warrant was issued by the Commissioners for the arrest of John Greene, Sen., who had escaped, and for his son, John, Jr., Richard Waterman and Nicholas Power, who were still at large. The Arnolds, Carpenter, Chasmore and Hawksworth were made officers to arrest one or all of these persons, seize their cattle and other

property and report to Boston. On Sunday, October 15, the prisoners refused to attend services at the First Church, but the magistrates made it compulsory, not until after they had given their promise that Gorton might have liberty to speak if he desired, after the sermon. Rev. John Cotton preached "at them" about Demetrius and the silver shrines at Ephesus, after which, Gorton, with his unusually keen mind and thorough knowledge of the Bible, gave a sharp rejoinder to the sermon, to the great scandal of the magistrates and people of the Bay Colony. Gorton was a safe match for any disputant in the ecclesiastical or civil field of debate.

On Tuesday, October 15, the prisoners, ten in number, were brought before the General Court for trial. Their names were Samuel Gorton, Randall Holden, John Wickes (Weeks), Richard Carder, Robert Potter, John Warner, William Waddell, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman and Nicholas Power. Sampson Shotten, one of the captives, had died and the two John Greenes, father and son, had escaped and were in hiding, on Conanicut Island. The charges against Samuel Gorton and company are thus stated in the Court records:

UPON MUCH EXAMINATION & SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF YOR WRITINGS, WITH YOR ANSWERS ABOUT THEM, WEE DO CHARGE YOU TO BEE A BLASPHEMUS ENEMY OF THE TRUE RELIGION OF OR LORD JESUS CHRIST & HIS HOLY ORDINANCES, & ALSO OF ALL CIVILL AUTHORITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD, & PERTICULERLY IN THIS JURISDICTION.

The Gorton case was one of the most celebrated before the Bay courts in Colonial days and deserves careful study. The Court consisted of the men already named, with Governor John Winthrop presiding. It was held at Boston and the gravity of the charges secured a full attendance of all the members. The charge of blasphemy especially interested the Puritan elders. In order that any claim of the prisoners for protection under the jurisdiction of Plymouth might be prevented, the Court announced that Plymouth had yielded its power, in this case, to the Bay. The Court also declared that if the defendants were not under their jurisdiction and no other, then the Bay had no redress for wrongs committed and must either resort to arms as a remedy, or submit to the insults and injuries heaped upon the Colony. A second reading of the charges reveals the whole animus of the trial. In them the Bay does not claim jurisdiction under Pumham's submission of his tribe and properties to Massachusetts. The Bay does not deny the validity of the deed of Miantonomi, nor does it question the integrity of the transaction, transferring Shawomet to Gorton and his company. The money had been paid, the land was theirs and two years later it was so declared by the English government, to which Gorton had, at the outset, proposed to submit his case for decision. Governor Winslow of Plymouth comes to

the defence of the Bay by saying, "And if any ask by what authority they went out of their own government to do such an act, know that his former seditious and turbulent carriage in all parts where he came, as Plymouth, Rhode Island, a place of greatest liberty, Providence, that place which relieved him in that his so great extremity, and his so desperate close with so dangerous and potent enemies, and at a time of such conspiracy by the same Indians \* \* \* together with his notorious contempt of all civil government, as well as that particular and his blasphemies against God, needlessly manifested in his letters to them" (of Massachusetts). But no one of Winslow's pleadings appear in the indictment. The charges are clear and explicit,—blasphemous opinions and utterances, accountability for which is due the Bay; and the trial is on for their lives.

At the trial, no one complained of injury committed or wrong done, not a person but the ministers and magistrates appeared against any one of the accused. Out of the writings of Gorton the magistrates framed twenty-six gross opinions. Gorton denied the construction they had given his writings and therefore was commanded by Ex-Gov. Dudley to be silent or put in irons. Four questions were propounded by the Court upon which Gorton was to answer for his life:

1. Whether the Fathers, who died before Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, were justified and saved only by the blood which he shed, and the death which he suffered after his incarnation!
2. Whether the only price of our redemption, were not the death of Christ upon the Cross, with the rest of his sufferings and obediences in the time of his life here, after he was born of the Virgin Mary!
3. Who is that God whom he thinks we serve?
4. What he means, when he saith, "We worship the star of our god Remphan, Chion, Moloch?"

Mr. Gorton made written replies to these theological questions and gave them to the Court. Governor Winthrop gave his assent to the answers, which angered Dudley, but Bradstreet, more liberal, at Gorton's request, desired that no more questions be put to him, unless he could be free to answer them. Here the trial ended, the case was closed and the verdict rendered. Heresy was punishable with prison or banishment, blasphemy by death, by Colonial law. All the magistrates but three condemned Gorton to die for blasphemy. With that sentence the elders were in full accord. But the verdict of the deputies, the representatives of the people, refused their assent to the state murder of a man of Gorton's spirit and character, and their voice by a majority of two saved the Bay Colony "the deep damnation of his taking off." The people of Boston were weary of heresy hunting and their sympathies were strongly on the side of the accused. Some punishment must be inflicted to justify the

General Court and save the dignity and honor of the Puritan Church and State. To that end Gorton was ordered to be confined at Charlestown, to be set at work, and to wear such iron chains as would prevent his escape until the Court should order his release. If he should break jail or utter "blasphemous or abominable heresies," a new trial and execution would ensue. The same sentence was imposed on John Wickes, Randall Holden, Robert Potter, Richard Carder, Francis Weston and John Warner, but they were sent to other towns for confinement. Waddell remained at large at Watertown, Waterman was dismissed with a fine and Power with an admonition. To add to the burden of imprisonment and the deprivation of their social and civil rights, the cattle of the convicted men were appraised and sold to meet the cost of the seizure and trial, the prisoners refusing to name two of the five appraisors of their property. The total expenses to the captives was about £160. Before their confinement the seven men in chains were paraded in a body, before the congregation at Rev. John Cotton's lecture, as a warning to other heretics and a lesson to their sympathizers. Gorton afterwards accused Cotton of advising in a sermon that he be starved to death. The Shawomet men were kept in prison, with few comforts, at hard labor, with chains on their limbs to prevent their escape, at the same time expressing the heresies for which they were condemned. On March 7, 1643-4, by the order of the General Court, they were set free and banished from all places in the government of the Bay, on penalty of death if found after fourteen days. Lest a stay in Boston would corrupt its Puritan purity, Gov. Winthrop ordered them to leave within two hours and forbade their stay at their own houses on their own land at Shawomet. Gorton and his associates joined their families at Aquidneck, where they were welcomed by a liberal-minded, conscience-loving people, who had set up and maintained the principles of civil and religious liberty since 1638. Shawomet remained a deserted settlement until 1647, when the scattered purchasers returned to their possessions, under the protection of the English Crown and the Charter which Roger Williams had brought from England, in 1644.

A judicial review of this historic case is difficult, since much evidence as to facts and conditions is wanting. It must be admitted that the title to Shawomet rested in Canonicus and Miantonomi, chief sachems of the Narragansett lands, of which Shawomet was a part, that the sale to Gorton and his associates of the large territory, five miles wide and twenty long, was a legitimate and legal one, and that the Bay Colony had no possible claim to any part of these lands growing out of the submission of Pumham and Socononoco to the Bay. This right was conceded by the Bay, for no charge of trespass or of fraudulent title to Shawomet lands appears in the certified statement. Had they claimed

the rights of ownership and civil jurisdiction, the siege, capture and imprisonment might have been justifiable. Mr. Charles Deane, an historical author and student of New England Colonial history, says of the Bay Colony: "Their whole conduct towards Gorton and his companions, from about the period of their removal to Shawomet until their summary banishment from the Massachusetts Colony, was atrocious." Judge George A. Brayton, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, in his story of the planting of Warwick, declared, "The conduct of the General Court of Massachusetts, towards Gorton and his associates at Shawomet, was uncalled for, unjust, outrageously, tyrannically so, to the great injury and damage of the complainants and a feeling that it required redress at the hands of the home government (England)." Gov. Arnold wrote, at the end of his story of the Shawomet tragedy: "Thus ended these atrocious proceedings, which form one of the darkest pages in the history of Massachusetts."

It would be manifestly unjust to the General Court of the Bay to charge the magistrates with malicious persecution of Gorton. It is fair to say that Gorton had won for himself an unsavory reputation at Boston, by reason of his lawsuits at Plymouth and Aquidneck and the disturbances he had occasioned at Providence and Pawtuxet, by which he had won the harsh censure of Roger Williams and the hostilities of the Arnold group. Gov. Winthrop had been advised of all these events and Wilson and Cotton could scent heresy afar off, even if its exponents were hidden in the thick forests beyond the Pawtuxet. To the Bay Colony, Gorton was the heresiarch of all New England in civil and religious matters. From what he had publicly taught and done he seemed to be a dangerous leader to be abroad, inoculating the new societies with the poison of his supposedly obnoxious opinions. Gorton was a positive man, a man of great abilities, a man of strong convictions, a man of physical and moral courage. He was far in advance of his age in his views as to civil government. He held a judicial attitude of mind in matters civil and doctrinal. He was an idealist, a metaphysician—men never understood by their own generation, the heralds of principles and events, hidden in the mists of futurity. It is doubtful if any men of that day understood Gorton, while most feared him. There were two effectual ways of ridding society of such dangerous men—the gallows or banishment, the former an efficient cure-all. An Indian deed of forest lands to a malefactor was no deterrent in the extermination of blasphemy. The United Colonies had just formed a union to destroy Indian devils—why might it not cast out all other devils lurking in the Narragansett forests,—forests claimed at one and the same time by Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut and Providence. Log cabins and squatter settlers were only appurtenances to forests, concerning which and their

absolute personal rights a mythical conception prevailed. The absence of Roger Williams in England was a relief to the men of the Bay in formulating their charge, for with heretical opinions at the fore there could be no doubt of Mr. Williams' attitude in advancing to the defence of his earlier hateful enemy. The men of the Bay in authority were mighty. They saw the difficulty they would be in in attempting to establish a land claim over Shawomet. Blasphemy was a Colonial Devil that must be cast out. Human life was of small account, with heresy in the balances. Proofs were abundant. Gov. Winthrop and the magistrates expected to hang Gorton and were disappointed. To them it was a solemn duty to God and men to relieve the world of a public danger by a short cut,—the gibbet. Like the axe, it was an effectual instrument of relief, though not so sharp. While such reasoning may palliate the harshly unjust treatment, it does not excuse the offence. Winthrop, Endicott, Dudley, Cooke, Atherton, Wilson, Cotton, *et al.*, were in the wrong, and some of them lived to repent of it. Listen to Gorton, when visited by the Narragansett chiefs to console him in his trials and banishment: "We made answer unto them, that for our parts, we were not discouraged in anything that had befallen us, for we were subjects to such a noble state in old England, that however we were far off from our King and State, yet we doubted not but in due time, we should have redress; and in the meantime we were resolved to undergo it with patience, and in what way we could, labour with our hands for the preservation of our wives and children. The answer they made unto us was this, that they thought we belonged to a better master than the Massachusetts did." By reason of the trials and sacrifices of Gorton and his associates, Shawomet has become a name not only memorable but consecrated by the heroism, the suffering and the Christian patience of these men and women of the early time. In "SIMPLICITIES DEFENSE AGAINST SEVEN-HEADED POLICY, or a True Complaint of a Peaceable People \* \* \* Against Cruel Persecutors, United in Church Government in those parts," *et al.*, Gorton has told the story of his and his people's sufferings, in a manner and spirit noble, Christian. By reading it, one becomes convinced of the great busy heart, the nobility of spirit and the intellectual vigor of Samuel Gorton, the chief of the twelve founders of Warwick.

In the autumn of 1644 or the early months of 1645, Samuel Gorton and Randall Holden and John Greene sailed from Manhattan for England to lay the situation of the Shawomet settlers before the English Commissioner of Plantations, of whom the Earl of Warwick was Governor and Judge. Before their sailing Gorton was invited to an Indian Council of the Narragansetts, presided over by Canonicus, Pessicus and Mixan, chief sachems. He was advised of the loyalty of the Indians and was told that they were desirous of submitting as a tribe unto the

government and protection "of that Honorable State of Old England." Yielding to their desires, expressing the wishes of the whole of the great tribe, Gorton drew up the paper which gave over "ourselves, peoples, lands, rights, inheritances, and possessions whatsoever, in ourselves and in our heirs successively forever unto the protection, care and government of that WORTHY AND ROYAL PRINCE, CHARLES, KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, his heirs and successors forever." This voluntary submission was signed by Pessicus, chief sachem and successor of Miantonomi, by Canonicus, associate sachem, and Mixan, son of Canonicus, under date of April 19, 1644. Gorton, Wickes, Holden and Warner were chosen as the Indians' agents to represent them before the King.

The Shawomet event had a singular influence on the minds of the Narragansetts, leading them to believe that as Gorton and his associates in capture had returned from Boston alive that they belonged to a superior class or race from the English of Massachusetts. They called the Bay people Wattaconoges, or coat men, or those who wore clothes, and the Gorton company Gortonoges. They concluded that the Gortonoges were a mightier people than the Wattaconoges and that the Massachusetts authorities had not slain them, for fear of an invasion of the stronger men from England, who would come over in large numbers and put the Bay people to death. Believing that the English government was in the hands of the Gortonoges, they readily consented to submit to it. The Shawomet delegates spent over a year in England before their mission was concluded. On the sixteenth of May, 1646, they were made glad by an order signed by thirteen Commissioners of Plantations, sitting at Westminster, directing the Bay to allow all who desire, "freely and quietly to live and plant upon Shawomet and such other parts of the said tract of land mentioned in our Charter (1644) \* \* \* without extending your jurisdiction to any part thereof or otherwise disquieting them in their consciences or civil peace, or interrupting them in their possessions." It was also ordered that Gorton, Holden and Greene should be allowed a safe passage from Boston to Shawomet. These orders were made general for all other Governors and Colonies in New England. Shawomet, through Gorton, Holden and Greene, as its advocates, won in the first battle before the English Court. Not only were the Gortonoges allowed to return to their properties, but their near neighbors and friends, the Narragansetts, had been won to their side and were never after allies of the Bay Colony.

Holden returned with the Order of the English Commissioners, arriving in Boston, September 13, 1646, Gorton remaining in England for two years. On receipt of the order at Boston, Edward Winslow of Plymouth was sent to England to inquire into the reasons of the order as to Shawomet and its occupants. Winslow here met Gorton as an opponent and answered his claims so satisfactorily that the final answer

was that Gorton and his associates had "transplanted their families thither and there settled their residences at great charge, we commend it to the government within whose jurisdiction they shall appear to be \* \* \* not only not to remove them from their plantations, but also to encourage them with protection and assistance in all fit ways." This revised order was sent to Massachusetts and Connecticut under date of July 22, 1647. The question of Colonial jurisdiction was thus left undecided and was not finally settled until the jurisdiction of the Colony of Rhode Island was established over the Narragansett country. Occupancy of Shawomet was granted to the Gortonoses on the condition that the settlers "demean themselves peacefully and not endanger any of the English Colonies by a prejudicial correspondency with the Indians or otherwise." When the three towns, Portsmouth, Newport and Providence, met at Portsmouth on the 19th of May to organize a government under the Williams Patent of 1643, before a permanent organization was made, "It was agreed that Warwick should have the same privileges as Providence" and Mr. Randall Holden was chosen an Assistant for Warwick. Two years later, concurrent with the town of Providence, on March 14, 1648-9, Warwick received an official town charter under the new government of Providence Plantations on Narragansett Bay. Samuel Gorton returned from England in 1648, by way of Boston, and was taken into custody, on arrival, but the order of the Earl of Warwick of 1646 served as his protection, and he proceeded to Shawomet to his former possessions and dwelling, where he gathered his family and friends about him after a long separation.

The first official act of the town of Warwick took place through an order of the General Recorder of the Colony. It is thus recorded:

"Having now received our orders this 8th of August, from ye Generall Recorder, we have chosen for a Towne Council, being a General Assembly order, Jo. Greene, Ezc. Holliman, Jo. Warner, Rufus Barton, Randall Holden; Town Magistrates, Rufus Barton, Jo. Wickes; Town Clarke, Jo. Warner; Constable, Hen. Townsend; Sergeant, Chri. Helene." While Shawomet dates its legal occupation, as established by the English Court from the date of purchase, January, 1643, its legal town existence began with its recognition by the General Assembly and the subsequent organization by the choice of town officers, August 8, 1647.



## CHAPTER XXI

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### THE PEQUOT WAR



## CHAPTER XXI. THE PEQUOT WAR.

The Indian tribes of New England, the occupants and rightful owners of much of the territory, were in the main friendly to the whites who came as discoverers and settlers. Whatever may have been the feelings of the tribes-people, the sachems without exception extended the welcome hand and spoke the welcome word. It may also be said, honestly, that the great body of discoverers and settlers of our northern coast, especially the latter, desired and sought the friendship of the tribes, among whom they came, often winning their good will by presents of various sorts, attractive to the eye and mind of the simple natives. Columbus describes the Indians of the south as "no wild savages, no cruel barbarians; they had good faces; they neither carried nor understood weapons, not even swords; they were generous and courteous; very gentle, without knowing what evil is, without killing, without stealing. Because," he said, "they showed much kindness for us, and because I knew that they would be more easily made Christians through love than fear, I gave to some of them some colored caps, and some strings of glass beads for their necks, and many other trifles, with which they were delighted, and were so entirely ours that it was a marvel to see." Verrazzano, the first to describe our New England coast and its people, says the Narragansetts were "the finest looking people and the handsomest in their costumes that we found in our voyage; their demeanor is gentle and attractive; they are very generous, giving away whatever they have; we formed a great friendship with them; we judged them to be very affectionate and charitable towards their relatives." With these benevolent qualities we associate bravery, great physical endurance, a high sense of justice, and constancy in true friendship. All were fierce, revengeful and quick and certain in resenting injuries. Though living a free, untamed life, warfare was not the natural instinct and nature of the Eastern Algonquin. The men were lazy, working only as necessity demanded. They were fond of hunting and fishing and the products of these labors supplied a large part of the food of the family. The women were the real workers in the home and the cultivators of the soil. At the same time it must be remembered that they were a simple-minded people, accustomed to modes of life, and habits of thought and acts absolutely unlike those of civilized peoples. Owing to differences in language each was liable to misinterpret the other. To the English mind, property in land was a permanent and personal possession. To the Indian, land values were temporary in nature and communal in exercise. With peoples of such wide racial diff-

erences, living in close proximity, it would be strange indeed if serious misunderstandings did not arise, leading to personal or tribal conflicts with the white settlers.

In full justice to the Indian, it may be said that he chose peace to war, and in full justice to the early settlers it may be said that their chief desire on the part of most was to treat the Indians justly and to show them the better ways of living. The exceptions proved the rule.

With the missionary spirit of the Plymouth, the Massachusetts Bay, the Connecticut and Rhode Island colonists, led by Bradford, Winthrop, Hooker, Williams and Clarke, went the baser element of Weston of Merry Mount, Oldham of Boston, and the like, who by varied ways, in dishonest trade, the sale of fire arms and rum and illicit intercourse, destroyed the confidence of the neighboring tribes, aroused the spirit of hate and revenge in the Indians, culminating in savage warfare. It is to the honor of savages, that war is to them the final step in their regard for the protection of their rights.

The early relations of the white settlers of New England with the adjacent Indian tribes were in the main peaceable and friendly. The treaty made with Massassoit in 1621, was sacredly observed as governing the relations of the Wampanoag tribes with all the Colonies until the death of Massassoit. The natural and inevitable causes of misunderstandings growing out of racial differences and business conduct were few and inconsequential and their duration brief. The heroic treatment administered by Captain Myles Standish to the hostile element in the Massachusetts tribe, south of Boston, was a complete and permanent remedy for any later troubles from that tribe. While all the colonists anticipated and were on the alert for hostile attacks and usually carried fire arms to their work, to the meeting house on days of worship and on their travels, it was seldom that occasion called for their protecting use. On the behalf of the Indian it may be said that he had good occasion to distrust the white man, in that he had better offensive and defensive weapons and tradition and history had taught him that these weapons had been maliciously used for the slaughter of defenceless and often inoffensive Indians, from the coasts of Labrador to the Everglades of Florida.

While the offensive and defensive alliance between Plymouth Colony and the Wampanoags was a source of strength and protection to the infant settlements, it was at the same time the occasion of a wakening animosity in the minds and hearts of the Narragansetts, the most powerful of the New England tribes.

The Wampanoag was a subject tribe to the Narragansetts, before the coming of the Pilgrims to Plymouth. The alliance of Massassoit with the Pilgrims in 1621 was a bold stroke of diplomacy and a defiant act of secession from the control of the stronger tribe. Had the Narragansetts

at that time resented the act of alliance, they could easily have destroyed with the aid of the eastern Indians the feeble colonists at Plymouth and the Bay, in an overwhelming slaughter and put a stop to the colonizing of eastern New England. The tradition of the exchange of bullets for arrows between Canonicus and Bradford was interpreted as an expression of the feeling of hostility which Indians felt towards the whites, and the bold, defiant attitude of the Plymouth leaders. Fortunately for the Colonists, the Narragansetts were under the administration of two remarkably wise and cautious chiefs, Canonicus and Miantonomi, the latter the nephew of the former. Canonicus was a great sachem, one of the greatest that ever ruled an Indian people. He was a man of peace, who bridled his wrath and governed his people in the spirit and purposes of a wise governor. From his ancestor, Tashtassuck, he inherited a strong nation, including all the New England tribes. The Indian tradition runs that he was the greatest prince in the country, ruling an empire of subjects, and having two children, a son and a daughter, whom as he could not match in dignity, he caused them to be united as husband and wife. Canonicus was the oldest of four children from this notable stock, giving full proof of his lineage by his ambitions for his people and his nobility of character. It can be truthfully said of Canonicus that he never violated a pledge made to the white settlers.

Miantonomi, the younger of the two Narragansett sachems, was a man of will, blood and mettle, and the executive in tribal administration, the extreme age of Canonicus preventing his active leadership in war or diplomacy. Had the leaders of the Plymouth Plantation understood the relations of Massasoit and his tribe as a subject people to the Narragansetts, they would not have made the treaty of 1621 with the Wampanoags, a subject tribe, but with Canonicus, the chief of the New England tribes, the broils which occurred later between the two tribes, separated by the Bay, would have been avoided, in which the Plymouth people were obliged to take up arms on the side of Massasoit against Canonicus. A notable instance occurred in 1632, when the Narragansetts crossed the Bay and attacked the English house at Sowams, to capture Massasoit. Both Boston and Plymouth, led by Captain Myles Standish, came to the defence of their neighbor and ally, and drove back the invaders. It is easy to see that the Narragansetts on the one hand and the white settlers of Massachusetts Bay, on the other, would naturally suspect and distrust each other, not to use the harsher words of hate and hostility towards each other.

Between these two antagonists, Roger Williams at Providence, a friend of the Narragansetts and also of Gov. Winthrop of the Bay, stood as a mediator between the two forces, reconciling their differences and stilling suspicions of both parties. In the capacity of a peacemaker be-

tween the Indians and the English colonists, Mr. Williams wrought his most important and most memorable work. His services were called for soon after his exile, and were always at the command of the Plymouth and Bay Colonies. The first occasion relates to the inception of the Pequot War.

The Pequot tribe occupied the territory on the west of the Narragansetts, bordering on Long Island Sound, in the south-east corner of the Connecticut Colony, including territory east of the Pawcatuck to Weekapaug. Hubbard calls the Pequots a "more cruel and warlike people than the rest of the Indians, a terror to all their neighbours." While their seat of government was at New London on the Thames, they held sway over all the tribes of the Connecticut River Valley, on the west, and, though fewer in numbers, terrorized the Narragansetts, on the east. Sassacus was the first great chief of the tribe known to the English, as well as the last, and at one time his domain and authority extended from the Hudson River to Narragansett Bay. After the arrival of the white colonists, the tribe was a menace to the settlers on all sides and it at once became the firm purpose of the English to reduce its power and if possible to annihilate it. The special provocations of the Pequot War were the murders of several whites, traders or settlers, among whom were Captain Stone and eight others, who, on a trading expedition to the mouth of the Connecticut River were slain by Pequot Indians and their goods and vessel appropriated. Stone was a Massachusetts Bay man, of dissolute habits and his death with that of Captain Norton passed unnoticed in 1633. The most tragic event was the murder of John Oldham, a Dorchester trader, in 1636, at Block Island. His vessel was taken by the Indians, the cargo seized and his two boys taken captive. Roger Williams made inquiry into the affair and reported to Governor Vane of Massachusetts the particulars of the tragedy. Canonicus and Miantonomi took an active part in ferreting out the murders and it was reported to the Bay authorities that the crime was committed because Oldham traded with the Pequots. The Pequots denied participation or knowledge of the murder of Captain Oldham, sent presents to the English at Boston, and promised to slay the murderers of the Stone party. Further troubles and bloodshed by the Pequots led to the discovery that the Connecticut tribe was trying to persuade the Narragansetts to join them in a war of extermination of the the Massachusetts settlements. Fearing further assaults from the Pequots and the danger of a conspiracy with the Narragansetts and Niantics, the Bay Colony declared war on the Pequots and a troop of over 200 men from Boston and the towns adjoining was raised and placed under the command of Colonel John Endicott and Lieutenant-Colonel John Winthrop, Jr., to make war upon the tribe.

The Bay expedition, under command of Colonel Endicott, embarked in three small vessels for Block Island for the purpose of prosecuting the war against the Pequots, "having been undertaken upon just grounds." A levy of £600 was ordered to meet the expense. The troops were ordered to "put to death the men of Block Island, but to spare the women and children; and from thence to go to the Pequots to demand the murderers of Captain Stone and other English, and one thousand fathoms of wampum for damages and some of their children for hostages, which if they should refuse, they were to obtain it by force." Captains John Underhill, Nathaniel Turner and Israel Stoughton held commands in the little army of about one hundred men. Plymouth and Connecticut Colonies were urged to send men to strengthen the force. The fleet arrived off Block Island about night-fall, the troops under Captain Underhill made the shore in small boats and an attack was made at dusk upon sixty savages, who had let fly a shower of arrows from behind sand dunes. The Indians, who were Niantics or renegade Narragansetts, fled into the forests for protection from the English bullets. During the two days spent on the Island, they scoured the woods to find two deserted villages of about sixty wigwams, some of which were large. They burned the wigwams, destroyed all the canoes and 200 acres of corn. Captain Underhill reported fourteen savages killed and a number wounded, with no losses of the English troops.

After an easy victory at Block Island the fleet sailed up the sound and landed at Saybrook, at the mouth of the Connecticut, to make an attack on the Pequots. Colonel Gardener, commander of the fort at Saybrook, did not approve of Colonel Endicott's plan, telling him "You have come to raise a nest of wasps about our ears, and then to flee away." General Endicott was firm in his determination to carry out the orders of his superior officers at Boston, and, being fitted out with boats and men and five vessels, they sailed to the Pequot River (the Thames) where they held a conference with the savages of the Pequot tribe. Sassacus, the chief sachem, was absent on Long Island and, receiving no satisfaction from the sub-chiefs, Endicott attacked the Indian villages, killed some savages, and burned their wigwams; the next day the Boston party destroyed the Indian village on the east bank of the river, broke up their canoes and returned to Boston, after killing fourteen Pequots and wounding forty. Endicott not losing a single man. While there may have been good reason for the punishment meted out to the Indians on Block Island, in retaliation for the Oldham murder, there seems to be none for the attacks made on the Pequots and the destruction of their two villages at the mouth of the Thames. Colonel Endicott was condemned by Commander Gardener of Saybrook and the Governor of Plymouth Colony remonstrated with the Bay government for needlessly provoking a war

with the Pequots. Endicott's plea in defence that he followed instructions, given without a full knowledge of conditions and without a just cause for the attack, fails to satisfy military or judicial opinion of later days.

As might be expected, the acts of the Endicott troops angered the whole body of the Pequot tribe and they plotted their revenge on all English colonists wherever found. The defenceless inhabitants of Connecticut were subjects of their revenge during the winter of 1636-37. Sassacus now bent his energies to the formation of a union of all the strong New England tribes for the destruction of the English settlers in New England. His plan embraced the alliance of the Mohawks, the Nipmucks and the Narragansetts with his own tribe, forming a body of warriors of at least eight thousand men, all of whom were known to be experienced in all the arts of Indian warfare, and merciless to their foes, of whatever blood. The white man fought by day with his flintlock and bayonet. The Indian fought by night with torches, tomahawk and scalping knife. The Indian mind now began to comprehend the purposes of the white man. Permanent settlement of the one meant the destruction or slavery of the other. Either result, anticipated and dwelt upon, aroused the more hostile and militant tribes to the necessity of vigorous resistance, the knowledge of which, on the part of the whites, led to vigorous measures of defence, and, if need be, of offensive warfare. It is not in our hearts to blame Sassacus and his braves for an alliance for tribal and general protection. Self-preservation is nature's first law for civilized or savage. Nor, on the other hand, can we condemn the New England fathers in the formation of the confederacy for the protection of the lives and acquired rights of the young colonies. The situation was a difficult one for both the Indian and the white man, and, with such wide differences in mental attitude and the misunderstandings of race and language, we must expect, as we find, sad mistakes in the acts of both parties.

Midway between the Indian tribes on Long Island Sound and the great body of white English colonists on Massachusetts Bay was the feeble settlement at Providence, made by Roger Williams and a few companions in 1636. One man, and one man alone stood between the two hostile forces, and this man had just been banished from the Bay Colony and had come out to make a home in the wilderness of the Narragansett country. That man was Roger Williams, and to him is due the honor of an achievement which saved the New England colonies from absolute destruction in this momentous crisis. Mr. Williams had made the friendship of Canonicus and Miantonomi, the chief rulers of the powerful Narragansetts. On the decision of that tribe, through these great sachems, rested the whole question of an Indian war of extermination. Mr. Williams was at once appealed to by the Governor of the Bay Colony to intercede

with Canonicus to prevent his alliance with Sassacus. The two great qualities which marked Mr. Williams as a great man now appear—his forgiving spirit and his love of peace. All ill-will, if he had cherished any bitterness, was set aside, and unmindful of his own comfort and safety, Mr. Williams, comprehending the situation, hastily, scarcely advising his wife of his purpose, proceeded by water in a frail canoe through "stormy wind with great seas" to the wigwam of Canonicus at Narragansett. But Sassacus was there before him, endeavoring to persuade the chief to join in the overthrow of the whites—saving none. How near the chiefs and tribe were to a decision in favor of an Indian alliance we shall never know. We do know that Mr. Williams spent three days and nights, in peril of losing his life, in the effort to prevent the union, urgently desired by Sassacus and the Pequot tribe. Here was the supreme test of Indian friendship towards Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams was a white man, pleading for the safety of white men. Sassacus, on the other hand, an Indian, was pleading for unity and loyalty in the Indian tribes as against the whites. It would seem almost a hopeless task for this lone man of another race to win in such an issue, but Roger Williams did win the allegiance of the mighty Narragansett tribe to the side of the English colonists and the great result of this mission was that Miantonomi and the two sons of Canonicus were induced by Mr. Williams to go to Boston, where a treaty of alliance and of peace was made between the Massachusetts colony and the Narragansetts, leaving the Pequots to fight their battle alone.

The issue of the Pequot War was determined by the influence and acts of Roger Williams. Finding that they must fight unaided, Sassacus gave free scope to his tribe to murder and destroy at will as at Saybrook and Wethersfield. Colonial troops from Connecticut and Massachusetts, reënforced by volunteers from the Narragansetts, Mohegans and Niantics to the number of about 540 in all, under the command of Captain Mason, of Connecticut, and Captain Underhill, of Massachusetts, met near the Pawcatuck River and planned an immediate attack on the Pequot fort on a hill in the northwest part of the present town of Stonington. Within the circular area were some seventy wigwams, sheltering from 500 to 700 Indians. Breaking camp in the early hours of May 26, 1637, after a season of prayer, the attacking party under Mason and Underhill reached the fort an hour before dawn. A dog's bark awakened the Indian sentry, and the cry, "Owanux, Owanux" (Englishmen, Englishmen), aroused the sleeping red men. Mason, with sixteen men entered one sally port and Underhill did the same on the opposite side, and English broadswords and firearms began the work of destruction. To hasten the slaughter, Captain Mason threw a firebrand on the straw roof of a wigwam and Captain Underhill started fires in other sections by trains of gunpowder. In an

hour the work of death was done and more than 500 men, women and children had been slain by fire or sword. Those who had attempted to escape were killed by the whites and friendly Indians without the fort, so that few, if any, escaped. Of the English only two men were killed, though a considerable number were wounded by Indian arrows. Mason narrowly escaped death, for an Indian had taken deliberate aim at him, when Mason's orderly cut the bowstring and he went through the ordeal unhurt.

The remnant of the Pequot nation discussed the several questions of attacking the Narragansetts, the white settlers or of taking refuge among the Mohawks on the Hudson. The latter course was chosen, and those not slain by hostile tribes found shelter beyond the borders of the New England, from whence they never returned to molest the colonists. Sassacus lost his life among the Mohawks. The order went forth that the name Pequot should never be spoken in New England. Notwithstanding, the ancient Indian trail from New York to Providence still bears the early name, "*The Pequot Trail.*"

While Captains Mason and Underhill won renown for the complete overthrow of the Pequot tribe, the great achievement of the war was wrought by Roger Williams and for almost forty years the colonists of Southern New England lived in peaceful relations with the native tribes. "The infant was safe in its cradle, the laborer in the field, the traveller in the forests; the houses needed no bolts, the settlements no palisades."



## CHAPTER XXII

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THE WILLIAMS PATENT



## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE WILLIAMS PATENT.

Under *The Providence Proprietary* has been shown the disposition Mr. Williams made of the lands given him by the Narragansett chiefs, March 24, 1638. The landed institution, established that year, continued for two hundred years and expired by reason of the disposal of all the property interests and the decease of all persons interested in preserving an incorporated historic memory of its records.

Mr. Williams was made aware of the importance of the consent of King Charles to the occupancy of the Plantations by the strong arguments of Samuel Gorton, if not by his own personal knowledge of the Royal control over the lands of North Virginia. Gorton insisted that Mr. Williams' Indian deeds had no value without the endorsement of the English government, and that a government as a squatter on Indian lands was a libel on the name of civilization and civilization. The discredit thrown upon the Plantations by so able an antagonist as Gorton stirred Mr. Williams to the depths of anger towards his neighbor and aroused the spirit of inquiry as to proper action.

Leaving Mr. Williams to his reflections on procuring a patent for the Plantations, our attention is called to the fact that at two sessions of the General Court on Aquidneck, the matter of a Charter had been considered. On November 25, 1639, Quarter Court day, at Newport, an order was passed for Mr. Easton and Mr. John Clarke to write to Mr. Harry Vane, "and desire him to treat about the obtaining a Patent of the Island from his Majestie." No further evidence exists as to the action of this committee.

At the General Court of the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck, held at Newport, September 19, 1642, it was ordered "that a Committee shall be appointed to consult about the procuration of a patent for this Island and Islands and the lands adjacent." Petitions were to be sent and letters written to Sir Harry Vane or to "any others whom they shall think meet for the speedy effecting of said business." Here we have a clear plan for a Patent twice acted upon and committees chosen in each instance to secure the services of Sir Harry Vane to obtain a Royal patent for the Islands of the Rhode Island Colony on Aquidneck. No reference was made to extend the patent over the two towns at the head of the Bay, and there is no evidence that the committees had consulted with Mr. Williams as to a charter or patent to include both settlements on the Bay—the Plantations and Aquidneck. In fact there is no probability that this last committee, consisting of Governor Coddington, Deputy Governor

Brenton, Assistants Easton, Coggeshall, Porter and Balston, William Dyer, Captain Jeoffreys, Captain Harding and Dr. John Clarke, would advise with Mr. Williams on business foreign to their interests. Some writers have tried to show that Mr. Williams was a friend of Mrs. Hutchinson, of Aquidneck, and a cordial supporter of her views, and hence influential in the Island colony. The fact is, that Mr. Williams had no connection with the antinomian movement in Massachusetts at all, and no sympathy with its followers. The Coddington-Hutchinson colony on Aquidneck was as far removed in principles and action from the Williams-Harris combine at Providence as were Williams and Gorton personally. There was little of common interest and nothing of coöperative relation. Hence it was that Coddington and Williams had little to do with each other. Their friendship, if it existed at all, was cold and indifferent. The reasons are almost too obvious to be stated, yet they should be, in view of the fact that some writers have reasoned by the law of probabilities, so often used in the treatment of Mr. Williams' acts, that a combination was formed between the committee of the Rhode Island Colony on Aquidneck and Mr. Williams, by which the latter was made the agent of the former, to secure a charter or patent, covering all the towns on Narragansett Bay.

The first broad line of separation between Aquidneck and Providence is to be seen in their attitude to religious thought and worship—the paramount consideration of Pilgrim and Puritan days. The Aquidneck settlers have not left us in doubt as to what they thought of the Christian faith and the Christian church. The church, the meeting house, the minister, the sacraments, the Bible, the various church organizations were the first concern of the people who founded Portsmouth and Newport. At Providence, Mr. Williams gave little heed to the religious life of the community. His mind was already bent toward *Seekerism*, even before his coming to Providence. That is manifest in his final letter to the church at Salem. After his brief connection and withdrawal from the Baptist church formed by Mr. Holliman at Providence, Mr. Williams made positive declarations against the existence of churches and their accessories. Mr. Richman includes the element of *Seekerism* as one of the motives that led Mr. Williams to England in 1643—a sect so independent “as to be no church at all, but the antecedent elements or atoms of one, seeking a principle of cohesion.”

Rev. Robert Baillie, an eminent Scotch Presbyterian, a member of the Westminster Assembly, came to know Mr. Williams personally while he was in London, 1643-44. He wrote: “The Independents are divided among themselves. One Mr. Williams has drawn a great number after him to a singular independency, denying any true church in the world, and will have every man serve God by himself alone.” It can readily be seen

that this attitude of mind sets at nought social and cooperative work of a religious sort, extinguishes the church and negatives the doctrine of soul liberty as a practical formula, making a personal and private affair of beliefs and unbeliefs, into the secrets of which no man may enter, and against which no man can enter an accusation. Later, Mr. Baillie writes: "Sundry of the Independents are stepped out of the church and follow my good acquaintance, Mr. Roger Williams, who says there is no church, no sacraments, no pastors, no church officers or ordinances in the world, nor has been since a few years after the apostles."

Mr. Richman calls Mr. Williams the founder of the *Seekers* and accords to him the theological attitude given that sect by "Old Ephraim Paget:" "Many have wrangled so long about the church that at last they have quite lost it, and go under the name of Expecters and Seekers. \* \* Some of them affirm the church to be in the wilderness, and are seeking for it there; others say it is in the smoke of the temple, and that they are seeking for it there,—where I leave them praying to God." Such independency in religious concerns, which were the chief subjects of thought and debate in those days, places Mr. Williams in the position of men who deny government and social order and are looking for "a new heaven and a new earth" in which dwell the gods of their own creating. It is absolutely sure that Mr. Williams had no *Seeker* followers on Aquidneck.

On another point of highest importance in a civil community, Mr. Williams was not in accord with Aquidneck—*law and order*. "*The face of Providence is set against Magistracy*" was the message sent to Governor Winthrop by Mr. Williams. Disorder was the prevailing condition throughout the Plantations, even after a form of civil government was set up on receipt of a town charter in 1649. So great was the disturbance and so deep-seated the personal animosities that Mr. Williams threatened to withdraw for the sake of quiet and rest "to the little Island of Patience." In fact, in 1644 he did remove from Providence and set up an Indian trading house at Cawcumscussuc, where he lived until his second voyage to England in 1653, when he sold his property to Richard Smith.

A final and absolutely conclusive reason as to a non-relationship between Mr. Williams and the Coddington group lies in the fact, admitted by all who understood the situation, that Aquidneck had no intention of forming any union with Providence or Warwick. Newport hated Warwick and hoped for the success of Massachusetts in obtaining and holding the territory now occupied by Gorton and company. Providence was to Newport what Mr. Richman called "A Non-Entity." It was only a collection of nondescript people, where lawlessness held sway and liberty and religion by-words. Mr. Coddington's strong desire was to form an alliance with Plymouth Colony. This measure seemed to him and many others of the Island Colony not only desirable but practicable. They rea-

soned that the possession of a patent for the islands would place the people of that section at an advantage in the discussion and settlement of a plan for forming a colony with Newport as the capital for the new order. It was evident to the Islanders that any union with the towns at the north would forever prevent such a coalition. To preclude such a possibility the strong Aquidneck committee, with Governor Coddington at the head, was chosen in 1642 to obtain, by the aid of Sir Harry Vane, a patent of the Island Colony. Had Mr. Williams' scheme been understood or considered a possibility, even the whole delegation would have visited England to prevent it. Of the purposes of the Aquidneck people and their feeling towards the Providence settlement, no one knew better than himself. And now, in 1643, occurred an inexplicable event in the history of our colony—the voyage of Roger Williams to England for a charter—a trip that extended from June, 1643, to September, 1644.

In May, 1643, prior to his departure, the colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Hartford and New Haven had united in the New England confederacy for mutual advantage and protection against the common danger, the Indians, as well as for "the preserving and propagating the truth and liberties of the gospel." It was provided that no other independent colony should be received into the four united colonial fellowship—a provision evidently aimed at a possible colony or colonies on Narragansett Bay. It did not preclude the enlargement of either one of the four colonies in the compact by annexation, and seems to have been aimed at the Plantations rather than Aquidneck—Plymouth at this time holding friendly relations with the Island towns and hoping for their annexation to their government.

Mr. Williams, as was usual, was his own counsellor as to the matter of the patent. He knew what Aquidneck had done and he knew William Coddington. He did not disclose his plans to those neighbors who needed a charter for a thousand people more than he did for a hundred. What they wanted he did not want, and it was the safer plan to keep his own counsels. Judge Staples says, with reference to his journey for a patent: "There is nothing in the records of Providence relative to his appointment." It is difficult to understand how Mr. Williams could have been sent by Providence, for there was no civil government at Providence and the Proprietary had no civil, financial or fiduciary ability to act for the proletariat. Had he brought the matter before the land corporation, public discussion would have ensued. Harris, the Carpenters, the Olneys and others might have entered their usual objections to Mr. Williams' scheme. The knowledge of the ambitions of Mr. Williams would have gone abroad to Aquidneck and Boston, and defeat would have marked the plan in its embryo. "A still hunt" was the Williams policy and method, while if an excuse for a trans-Atlantic voyage was demanded, it

was forthcoming in Mr. Williams' purpose to print "The Key to the Indian Language." Such a reason would probably have satisfied "My loving friend, Gov. Winthrop," though there are no letters, in a voluminous correspondence, relative to the trip to England or its purpose. The plan was Mr. Williams' own, it was well laid, and under the cover of other measures it was securely kept and successfully carried out.

By the terms of his exile, Mr. Williams could not leave by the port of Boston, so his voyage was made from New York by a Dutch ship, which landed him in London in the autumn of 1643. The Civil War had just begun, the first battles had been fought in the great contest between King Charles and the Earl of Essex—leaders of the Cavaliers and the Puritans. A battle no less fierce, wanting only the element of blood, is waging in Parliament. Pym, the eloquent Puritan leader; Sir Harry Vane, the brilliant independent, and Cromwell, the uncrowned knight in debate, are the leaders of the party fighting for Toleration *versus* Prelacy. The outcome of that contest was the famous "*League and Covenant*," enacted while Mr. Williams was "a looker on at Venice."

Vane is a busy man in London, but has time to consult with Mr. Williams as to colonial affairs in New England and to hear his version of social and civil conditions. On his long voyage Williams completed his "*Key to the Indian Language*" and is waiting for printer's proofs while discussing Toleration with Milton, or listening to the debates of the Westminster Assembly, then in session in London. The Earl of Strafford, Sir Thomas Wentworth, has been found guilty of treason, and by the consent of his King Charles has been beheaded in the tower, while Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford, a foremost supporter of the King and the most influential man in all England, was in prison waiting his trial, which began 1644, and ended in conviction and death on the block in 1645. These were troublous days in England, pregnant with the most momentous events of English history.

Mr. Williams has not given us the story of his experiences in London during this epoch-making period. During the later month of 1643, while Mr. Williams was in London, three of the greatest members of the Long Parliament went to death—two on the battlefield, Hampden and Falkland, and Pym, the eloquent and bold leader of the Parliamentary party, dying on the 8th of December, 1643, after a lingering illness. Carried on the shoulders of ten of the leading members of the House of Commons, Pym was buried in Westminster Abbey, with the lamentations of the patriots of New English liberties. Concerning these great events Mr. Williams is silent. We only know some things he did, which are also evidence of his mental states. His "Key" was printed and his book, "*The Bloody Tenant*," was written and printed during his stay in and about

London. To understand the occasion of this volume, we need to refer to events transpiring in London and England during Mr. Williams' sojourn and a little before "Toleration" was the theme of debate in Parliament and in the Westminster Assembly. Of the one party were those who declared against all liberty in belief and worship except as decreed by the formulas and ordinances of the church. On the other extreme, were the men who urged that the "inventions of men or any carnall liberty, under a deceitful colloure of liberty of conscience, may be duly and seasonably supprest, though they wish as much forbearance and respect may be had of tender consciences as may stand with the purity of religion and peace of the churches." It can readily be seen that between these two divergent views, multitudes of beliefs might find shelter. For centuries the struggle had been on between men of progressive thought and iron creeds, and men were broken into submission to authority by all forms of persecution. The sixteenth century revealed a more tolerant spirit towards heretics, and but for the record of Mary, that period showed immense gains. The Baptists had declared for liberty, the Brownists had defined the relations of the civil to ecclesiastical power. The Pilgrims had exiled themselves for the sake of conscience liberty, finding in Holland a safe retreat from English church tyranny, and in America the full freedom for mind and soul. When Mr. Williams landed at London, the Puritan was on the rack, and had been since Charles the First and Laud had harried more than 20,000 of them out of the kingdom to find shelter in New England. In the midst of the fierce encounter between Puritanism and the Church which had resolved itself into a civil war, with the King at the head of the Cavalier army, and Cromwell leading the Ironsides, Mr. Williams appears on the scene of action. His friend, Sir Harry Vane is among the chiefs for large Toleration. "The League and Covenant" are the product of his brilliant leadership and the unanimous adoption of this great measure by both Houses of Parliament are the measure of his influence and popularity.

Mr. Williams enters the arena in the famous allegory of "The Bloody Tenents" between Truth and Peace. All Englishmen are in hot heat in the fever and fervor of the great debate. From the Parliament Houses to the tuppenny bars of London the voices of loud harangues are heard on religious freedom and Toleration *vs.* Intolerance. All is music to our Colonial exile and he is moved by all he sees of civil war and hears of the clash of tongues to write his academic treatise on "Toleration." Mr. Williams' distinctive literary quality was loud sounding titles to his various treatises. "*The Bloody Tencent*" and "*George Fox Dugged Out of His Burrowes*," etc., are examples. One can find all the ideas credited to Mr. Williams by reading "*Religious Peace; or a Plea for Liberty for Con-*

*science,"* by Leonard Busher, London, 1614; "*A Dialogue wherein is proved by the Law of God: By the Law of the Land, etc., that no Man ought to be persecuted for his religion,*" by John Murton, 1620; and Phillingworth's "*Religion of the Protestants,*" 1638. The last-named work went through five editions in a brief time and is to-day a classic on religious liberty. Mr. Williams' "Bloody Tenents" was published anonymously and in 1646 was ordered to be burned by the House of Commons, of which Sir Harry Vane was a member. It is quite easy to understand Mr. Williams' attitude in this book by noting two or three mental qualities, universally admitted. He had by nature a polemic spirit for debate, using language that was vexing and irritating in the extreme to his opponents. The judicial Thomas Durfee, the distinguished jurist of Rhode Island and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State, writes: "Historians urge that he (Williams) was eccentric, pugnacious, persistant, troublesome; undoubtedly he was." Mr. W. B. Weeden speaks of "the vagaries of his (Williams) individual will." John Quincy Adams characterized him as "conscientiously contentious." Governor Bradford, of Plymouth, prays "that he may have a settled judgment and constancie in the same." These several opinions mean one and the same thing, the inability to turn into practical channels his own mental operations. This defect in mental adjustment is clearly illustrated in the charter which Mr. Williams obtained, under date of March 14, 1644, and will be noted in that connection.

In November, 1643, Parliament made Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, Governor-in-Chief and Lord High Admiral "of all those Islands and other Plantations inhabited or planted by, or belonging to any His Majesty the King of England's Subjects within the bounds, and upon the coasts of America." Six lords and seven commoners were chosen as commissioners "to join in aid and assistance." Sir Harry Vane is a member of this body and most likely its most influential factor. As he had spent two years in Boston, had a clear knowledge of Colonial matters and was a friend of the Aquidneck Colony as well as of Mr. Williams, it is probable, it is certain, that his advice and vote in the commission would prevail. It is safe also to say that Mr. Williams was a welcome guest at Belleau, Vane's country seat in Lincolnshire, where the outline of the patent was discussed, and Mr. Williams' plans consented to. A patent involves several important elements. Among them are definite bounds of territory to preclude rival claimants; civil units or townships included; general rights and protection guaranteed; special rights growing out of special conditions, social, civil or religious; service and tribute demanded in return for patent ordinances and privileges. So much emphasis has been laid upon the Williams patent of 1644, as the first royal grant, estab-

lishing the first government of the world on the sound base of civil freedom and religious liberty, it is well worth our most careful study. We copy the substantial parts of the instrument that there may be no misunderstanding as to its contents and purport. The first paragraph gives the names of the Governor General, Robert Rich, the Earl of Warwick, and the seventeen commissioners, among whom are Sir Harry Vane, William Fiennes, Viscount Say and Seal, John Pym, Samuel Vassal and Oliver Cromwell, the majority of whom, if not all, were of the liberal Parliamentary Party. After a statement of the duties and powers of this Colonial Board, the bounds of the territory are stated: "A tract of land in the Continent of America aforesaid, called by the name of the Narragansett Bay; bordering northward and northeast on the patent of the Massachusetts, east and southeast on Plymouth Patent, south on the Ocean, and on the west and northwest by the Indians called Nahigganencks, alias Narragansets; the whole tract extending about twenty-five English miles unto the Pequot River and country."

It will be noted that the charter confers powers to form a civil government in accordance with the will of the majority, provided that the "Laws, Constitutions and Punishments \* \* \* be conformable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of the place will admit." These terms of civil government are precisely the same as were conferred on all the American Colonies. They differ not a jot or tittle from the charters of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth Hartford, New Haven, or Virginia. There is a reservation of "Power and Authority for to dispose the general government that as it stands in relation to the rest of the Plantations in America," not contained in the other patents. A public seal of "Providence Plantation, in the Narragansett Bay in New England" is authorized, the charter to cover the towns of Providence, Portsmouth and Newport. No claims are made as to levies of service or taxation, no special protection guaranteed from Indians or other enemies and not the slightest reference to religious freedom or even toleration. Mr. Arnold assumes that the words "Civil Incorporation" inclusively covers religious freedom, and Mr. Strauss follows him in the same interpretation. This seems to partake of the nature of special and specious pleading. It is this kind of assumption on the part of the earlier biographers of Mr. Williams that has caused later historians to challenge and contradict the earlier verdict. All the charters of the English Colonies, under one name or another, establish civil government for and by the people, subject to a revision by the Crown. No more and no less was granted by the Williams Patent. By the Charter of 1663, written by John Clarke, the clause declaring and establishing religious liberty stands as the opening sentence of that immortal instrument. The preamble reads:

AND WHEREAS, IN THEIR HUMBLE ADDRESS, THEY HAVE FREELY DECLARED, THAT IT IS MUCH ON THEIR HEARTS TO HOLD FORTII A LIVELY EXPERIMENT, THAT A MOST FLOURISHING CIVIL STATE MAY STAND AND BEST BE MAINTAINED, AND THAT AMONG OUR ENGLISH SUBJECTS WITH A FULL LIBERTY IN RELIGIOUS CONCERNMENTS.

Whatever Mr. Williams may have thought or believed as to soul liberty, he did not secure its adoption or expression in the patent. Whatever Sir Harry Vane or Cromwell or the Earl of Warwick or any or all of the Commission for the Colonies believed and freely expressed in other state papers, the Williams Patent of 1644 gives no hint of their views as to religious liberty in "Providence Plantations in Narragansett Bay." They could write "Toleration" and "The League and Covenant" into the English Constitution. Their tongues are dumb and their pens silent as to *the great concerns, "The lively experiment,"* which would have made the Williams Patent the first overseas protective guaranty of both civil and religious liberty for men. History stood with uplifted pen,—until in 1663, Dr. John Clarke inscribed "FULL LIBERTY IN RELIGIOUS CONCERNMENTS," on the Great Charter of the Rhode Island Colony.

Much confusion has arisen as to the meaning of the western bound of the tract as described in the patent,—"*On the west and northwest by the Indians,*" etc. The Narragansett and Niantic Indians occupied all the lands from the Bay to Pawcatuck River, between Warwick and the Ocean. Did Mr. Williams except these lands from the Patent? If so, the Patent only included through purchases,—Providence, Aquidneck and Warwick,—about half the present State of Rhode Island. Did he mean to extend the west bound to the Thames or Pequot River? Did he intend to destroy the Indian titles and governments by the Royal Patent? What is meant by "the tract extending about twenty-five English miles?" The indefiniteness of the west boundary line practically nullifies the Patent, so far as it related to its extent.

About a year after the return of Mr. Williams with the Patent he received a letter from Massachusetts relative to the same territory, as follows:

Sr, wee receaved lately out of England a charter from ye authority of ye high Courte of Parliament, beareing date 10th December, 1643, whereby ye Narragansett Bay & a certaine tract of land wherein Providence & ye Island of Quidny (Aquadneek) are included, wch wee thought fitt to give yow, & other our countrymen in those pts, notice of, yet yow may forbear to exercise any jurisdiccion therein, otherwise to appeare at our next Generall Courte, to be holden the first 4th day of ye 8th month, to shew by what right yow claime any such jurisdiccion; for wch purpose yorself & other yor neighbors shall have free liberty to come, stay & retourne, as the occaccion of ye said busines shall require.

Dated at Boston, in ye Mattacusetts, 27, 6 mo., 1645.

To Mr. Roger Wms, of Providence, by order of ye Counsell.

INCREASE NOWELL, Sect.

In explanation of this extraordinary circumstance that Massachusetts Bay had secured a patent of the same territory as the Providence Patent, under date of the 10th of December, 1643, three months prior to that of Mr. Williams, it should be stated, that in 1641, Hugh Peters, Thomas Welde and Mr. Hibbens were sent to England as special agents of the Colony to look after its interests. In 1645, this Committee was called home and on its return this Patent was brought back as one result of their mission. The boundaries are stated in precisely the same words as the Williams Patent. The reasons for the patent as stated in the instrument are the excessive cost of founding the Massachusetts Colony, and its rapid growth, requiring an expansion of its territory. The Narragansett Patent provided a reservation of all lands previously granted "and in present possession held and enjoyed by any of his Majesty's Protestant subjects," while the Providence Patent made no such proviso. "As no English grant had been made of any of this territory, unless to Plymouth, the reservation is of no account. As related to the Williams Patent, Mr. Arnold discusses the matter of the two patents at length without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion, while Mr. Richardson in one of his essays suggests its invalidity on the ground that it was signed by only a moiety of the Commissioners." Here he is in error. Mr. Pym, one of the eighteen, died December 8, 1643. The Narragansett Patent was signed by nine of the Commissioners, a majority of one of the whole board. He also cites the fact that Vane and Cromwell did not sign the Narragansett Patent, but Cromwell did not sign the Williams Patent. The fact that it was dated on a Sunday does not invalidate the document. Whatever our historians may attempt to show as probable as effecting the validity of one or the other document, it is absolutely sure that on the 10th of December, 1643, the Royal Commissioners issued a legal patent to Massachusetts Bay Colony, of the Narragansett Bay Country, and that the same body issued a patent of over identically the same territory to Roger Williams, under date of March, 1643-4. Why such a contradictory act was done, no historical evidence can be found. The main fact is unquestioned that on all vital points as to rights, powers and privileges, the two documents are identical in language and interpretation.

If soul liberty is assumed as an essential factor in the Williams Patent, it was equally so in the Narragansett Patent, and all historians of any repute know that Massachusetts Bay Colony was striving to reduce believers in that doctrine by flogging and imprisoning Baptists and scourging and hanging Quakers. The banishment of the Aquidneck Colonists was excellent evidence of "Toleration" as understood and practised at Boston, led as they were by Governors Winthrop and Endicott,—Mr. Williams' "loving friends."

The real mystery surrounding these two patents of the same tract in and around Narragansett Bay relates to two facts, one that the Massachusetts Bay Colony, after giving notice to Mr. Williams of the extent and priority of the Narragansett Patent did not take any action in defense of the right, which the people of the Colony of Providence Plantations waited nearly three years—till May, 1647, before they organized under the Williams Patent. The records of both Colonies are dumb, and theories are not history.

Historically, the most remarkable feature of the Williams Patent is the Colonial title—"PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN THE NARRAGANSETT BAY IN NEW ENGLAND." Mr. Williams certainly magnified his office as a patent maker. Here we have a clear case of the tail wagging the dog. Providence was not an organized community. It had possibly an hundred people, scattered in the wilderness, between the Pawtucket and Pawtuxet Rivers, with a Massachusetts Bay contingent on the south side of the Pawtuxet. This community of separated men and women—separated in more senses than remoteness, had not a civil officer of any name or sign, neither civil law nor magistrate, remaining in 1644 in the inorganic condition of 1636, save as a self-incorporate land company, styled in law a proprietary. This was all of Providence Plantations,—land, wild beasts and forests and a handful of discontented people. No law, no officer, no government. Warwick, recently bought by Gorton and his friends, also without civil government, was not included in "The Plantations" of Mr. Williams.

At the south end of Narragansett Bay on Aquidneck Island a thousand people were settled in two towns, Portsmouth and Newport. The towns had orderly civil governments, courts of justice, magistrates; a Colony had been formed, "Democraticale," with religious liberty at the base. This Colony has had a Governor and Deputy, a General Assembly, Colonial Secretary and Treasurer and courts of justice for four years. It has a Colonial seal, with the motto of peace, "*Amor vincet omnia.*" Here was a full fledged Colony, an inchoate commonwealth, already stretching out its arms in prayer for Royal recognition, as an independent Colony. At four annual elections since the first in 1640, William Coddington, a wise ruler and a just judge, had been elected Chief Magistrate of the Colony of Rhode Island on the Island of Rhode Island.

Mr. Richman writes of the two communities: "Now that the Island of Aquidneck had become a political entity, the contrast between it and the entity (or non-entity) Providence was marked in the extreme. By Providence there was symbolized individualism—both religious and political—a force centrifugal, disjunctive, and even disruptive. By Aquidneck (and especially by the Newport part of it) there was symbolized collectivism—a collectivism thoroughly individualized as to religion, but in

politics conjunctive and centripetal." \* \* \* "During the age of Roger Williams that which we are bidden to contemplate on the shores of Narragansett Bay is a struggle between separatism and collectivism." Newport and Portsmouth had, besides the principles named, a population of well educated and well-to-do people, who had had experience in civil government in England and at Boston. At Providence all were poor, and Mr. Williams the only person of a fairly liberal education.

The people of Aquidneck had agitated the question of a separate Colony since 1639, but for unknown reasons, a patent had not been secured. It may be assumed however that the opposition of King Charles to free institutions, supported as he was by Archbishop Laud, in bitter opposition to Puritanism in Church and State, was the chief reason for the failure. We have already seen that Aquidneck was opposed to a political union with Providence and Warwick, with strong leanings towards a union with Plymouth, which laid claim to the islands adjoining her territory on the east shore of the Bay. It would have been the sheerest act of justice, diplomacy and courtesy in Mr. Williams had he consulted Gov. Coddington and Dr. John Clarke as to the terms of a patent that might unite the settlements at the north and south ends of the Bay. Both were wise men, both diplomats. It is possible that a permanent union might have been effected, advantageous to both. But it may as well be stated, first as last, that Mr. Williams seldom sought advice, and when advised seldom acted with it. Masson calls Mr. Williams "the arch individualist,"—the final word of history concerning this singular man.

There can be but one verdict in respect to the act of Mr. Williams. It was unjustifiable on any and all grounds. Mr. Williams acted the part of a self-chosen representative of the Plantations. He went to England, acted, returned, wholly on his own account. Had he limited his mission to the Plantations and obtained a patent for it, there could have been no criticism, on the other hand praise would have been due. He did not so act. By the inclusion of the Rhode Island Colony in his patent, he was false to that Colony, to the Commissioners and to himself, and to truth. Mr. Williams well knew that he was invoking the spirits of evil, whose lashes were the strings of scorpions. The temptation was great, the opportunity fair, the temporary success beyond all expectation, the end—Colonial discord, paralysis. Not the least of the sad results of this *faux pas* was the destruction of the confidence of the Aquidneck settlers in their Boston friend and supporter, Sir Harry Vane. By the representations of Mr. Williams, he is made to turn his back to them,—a real political entity, and to favor what Mr. Richman calls a "non-entity,"—Providence Plantations. Twenty years later, in 1663, Dr. John Clarke, the great and wise legislator and diplomat, the author of the *Great Charter*,

*the Magna Charta of American liberties*, with a breadth of vision unexcelled by the statesmen of his time, and with a magnanimity equal to his love of liberty, rewrote the title of the settlements on Narragansett Bay, in imperishable form, "THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS IN THE NARRAGANSETT BAY IN NEW ENGLAND, IN AMERICA." The Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck then possessed no rightful place as the leader in the grand march of civil and religious liberty.

Mr. Williams returned to New England in the autumn of 1644, by way of Boston, by reason of a letter of safe passage through the town, from the Earl of Warwick, Governor General of the Colonies. His coming had been heralded at Providence and in the company of trusty friends, who met him at Boston, he followed the old Indian trail till he reached the banks of the Seehonk, which he crossed eight years before almost alone, an exile from Massachusetts. A flotilla of fourteen canoes, loaded with people, now welcomed and escorted him on his triumphant way to his home in Providence. He bore on his person the sacred parchment which made the Plantations a Colony of the Crown. It was a day of great rejoicing at Providence, but one writer, Richard Scott tells us: "The man being hemmed in in the middle of the canoes was so elevated and transported out of himself that I was condemned in myself that amongst the rest I had been an instrument to set him up in his pride and folly. And he that before could reprove my wife for asking her two sons why they did not pull off their hats to him, and told her she might as well bid them pull off their shoes as their hats. \* \* \* And he that could not put off his cap at prayer in his worship, can now put it off to every man or boy that pulls off his hat to him."

But the patent, the cause of such joy at Providence was the cause of the deepest sorrow and humiliation at Newport. While the sun of hope shone on the Plantations, a dark eclipse brooded over Aquidneck. The Colony of Rhode Island was, by the stroke of Mr. Williams' pen, stricken from the map of New England and Providence Plantations in Narragansett Bay took its place. But that was the smallest source of grief, for the paltry settlement at the head of the Bay took the place of the Capital town and Portsmouth and Newport occupy a subsidiary place in the new Colony.

Governor Coddington has never worshipped at the shrine of Mr. Williams, nor will he ever. Dr. John Clarke is a diplomat. While he does not conceal his mortification at the humiliation, he does conceal his "curses not loud but deep" and waits the supreme hour of sweet revenge. For three years the Island peoples delay action as to acceptance of the Patent. The records are meagre,—the oracle is dumb. Coddington will never yield to the usurper or recognize loyally the Williams Patent. The Rhode

Island Colony still pursues its regular course of elections and judicial proceedings, with Mr. Coddington as Governor. The Governor, before Williams' return had learned of this strange assumption of authority in his act to annihilate the Island Colony and wrote to Governor Winthrop, Aug. 5, 1644, "to have either such alliance with yourselves or Plymouth, one or both as might be safe for us all." The letter was referred to the Commissioners of the United Colonies, meeting at Hartford, Sept. 5, 1644, and action was taken on the 9th as follows: "Some of the inhabitants of Rhode Island haveing intimated a willingnes to be received into and under the Government of one of the Colonies. The Commissioners considering that by an utter refusall, they may by the discords and diversions among themselves, be exposed to some great inconvenyence, & hopeing many of them may be reduced to a better frame of government, thought fitt that if the major part & such as have most interrest in the Island will absolutely and without reservacion submitt, either the Massachusetts or Plymouht may receive them."

Plymouth Colony is also disturbed over the Williams Patent, and charges an encroachment on their patent. Governor Winslow pleads with the Earl of Warwick "that wee might enjoy our ancient limits of government granted in our letters patent and shewed that their charter (Williams, for the limits of it now granted) was contained within our line of government."

In furtherance of the contention that the Williams Patent was in direct opposition to the prior patent of Plymouth, a vigorous protest was sent to England and Mr. John Brown of Plymouth, Rehoboth and Wannamoisett, was sent to Aquidneck as messenger, with a copy of the following instructions, dated at New Plimouth, Nov. 8, 1644:

1. *That a great part of their supposed government (Williams Patent) is within the line of the government of New Plimouth.*
2. *That we assuredly knew that this even to be honoured House of Parliament would not, nor will when they shall know of it, take from us, the most ancient plantation, any part of the line of our government, formerly granted, it being contrary to their principles.*
3. *To forbid them and all and every of them to exercise any authority or power of government within the limits of our letters patents.*
4. *To certifie them that Coweset is not only within the said limits, but that the sachim thereof and his sonnes have taken protection of this our government. And therefore to forbid them (the Williams Patent) to enter upon any part of his or their lands without due order and leave from our government.*

Mr. Brown's visit to Aquidneck to deliver his message occurred on a day when the people were met "to take into consideration a new disposall of the lands formerly given out, as if some had too much and some too

little, & for now respect of persons, & their estates were to be laid aside." Gov. Coddington and Mr. Brenton did not favor the actions of the new governments, and did not attend the meeting. It seems that Samuel Gorton had come into some magisterial relation to the land matter and was present at the public meeting, where Mr. Brown made known the declarations of Plymouth. Gorton, speaking for the Williams Patent party, opposed Mr. Brown, and declared that "he deserved to die for that which he had done and were hee in any other place it would cost him his life." It is evident,—from Gov. Winslow's story of the affair, that the meeting at Portsmouth was divided on the land and colony questions, for the meeting broke up for the day, Mr. Brown took his leave and Plymouth put its trust for the safety of its rights in the English Colonial Commissioners. We are at a great loss of evidence as to what transpired at Aquidneck or Providence between 1644 and 1647. We do know that Gorton accepted the Williams Patent at once, though it did not include Warwick. We also know that Gov. Coddington opposed it, and it is to be assumed that he was supported by the majority of the Islanders. It is also fair to believe that Dr. John Clarke was led to support the Williams Patent. What the people thought and how they acted are problems beyond solution. Cal-lender remarks: "It is not to be wondered at, if it took them some time to agree in a method" of civil government.





## CHAPTER XXIII

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ROGER WILLIAMS, THE SAVIOUR OF NEW ENGLAND



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### ROGER WILLIAMS, THE SAVIOUR OF NEW ENGLAND.

The earlier New England historians, from Backus to Arnold, elevated Roger Williams to the seat of honor as the first man among men to declare and to establish a civil government, in which the right of the individual man to personal, civil and spiritual freedom were enjoyed. Later and the latest of the new school of American historians, examining new and original records and interpreting old records in the greater light of historic truth, are reaching a different conclusion as to the value of the work and influence of Mr. Williams. While admitting him to the ranks of world benefactors and leaders, they are forced to conclude that the claims of earlier writers were extravagant and extra judicial, and that some new, truthful and more conclusive tablet must be written to perpetuate his name. Mr. Williams never claimed for himself what his enthusiastic admirers would attach to his deeds. For instance, Bancroft, the rhetorical historian of early New England writes: "*He (Roger Williams) was the first person in modern Christendom to establish civil government on the doctrine of liberty of conscience, the equality of opinions before the law.*" Another historian of the analytic and remorseless modern type, a distinguished teacher and author, declares with equal emphasis: "Mr. Williams did not declare for soul liberty before his banishment and he never did afterwards as a working hypothesis."

Our own position is that the work attributed to Mr. Williams at Providence was done by Dr. John Clarke and William Coddington at Portsmouth and Newport, in the founding of the Colony of Rhode Island on Aquidneck, as discussed in another chapter. The field between the two extremes of opinion is wide and will be debatable ground for long years, deferring the final verdict, but in the end making the result more satisfactory and final. The perspective of a thousand years will show the real stature of the men who founded and built our great American Republic.

Meanwhile there is a pedestal of large proportions, now unoccupied, on which Mr. Williams can stand in colossal form, in the character of PEACEMAKER AND SAVIOUR OF THE NEW ENGLAND COLONIES. For this high place there is no formidable claimant and no envious competitor. The exalted honor belongs to Roger Williams of Providence and to him alone.

Roger Williams was a man of singular intellectual and moral qualities, a full and clear interpretation of which belongs to the disciples of

Henry James. Some of these mental and moral traits seem to have been antagonistic, at war with each other. All admit that Mr. Williams was a master in polemics. Controversy was his natural attitude, from which no period of his life was free. Much of this disputatious spirit and exercise was absorbed in academic debate. In fact, Mr. Williams' quill-pen was his most effective weapon of offensive and defensive warfare. His courage and tongue often failed him in a personal encounter. He was gifted with a large and brilliant vocabulary of English and his armory of expletive epithets and luminous adjectives was full to overflowing. He was a gallant carpet-knight and dealt death-bearing blows to absent foes. The only occasion which reveals Mr. Williams' strength as an oral debater was his three days encounter at Newport, in August, 1672, with the masters of the Quaker "Principles," Burnyeat, Stubbs and Edmundson. Mr. Williams described Edmundson as "A flash of wit, a face of brass, and a tongue set on fire from the Hell of Lyes and Fury." Edmundson said of Williams: "One Roger Williams an old Priest and an enemy of Truth. \* \* \* The bitter old man could make nothing out, but on the contrary all the slanders and accusations against the Quakers were turned back upon himself; he was baffled and the People saw his Wrathness, Folly and Envy against the Truth and the Friends." Mr. Jones calls the debate "a tilting of wind-mills on both sides," and cites it as "a melancholy monument to the bitterness of these Seventeenth Century theological wars." A great increase to those of the Quaker faith at Newport and Providence is the best evidence that the Quakers won in the wordy warfare.

In his fighting moods, Mr. Williams seems to have been seized with the "passion for scribbling," a disease called in the Latin tongue "*Cacophyes Scribendi*." His titles are not fully equal to Cotton Mather's, but what is wanting in quantity is made up in quality. His punitive and death-dealing epithets were hurled like red-hot shot at real or imaginary foes. But all this quality of controversy seemed healthy, normal, relevant in an age that tolerated and read John Cotton, and Nathaniel Ward, alias "The Simple Cobbler of Agawam." Of such effervescent militancy, it may be said that the danger place was the point of the polemic pen—that "the bark was worse than the bite."

Friendships were lost and friends were never won,  
By wordy-shotted pens instead of guns.

Polemics aside, Roger Williams was a peace-maker. The qualities of mind and heart that qualified him to fill this honorable place in New England history far over-balance the controversial temper and go far towards over-shadowing it. Mr. Williams was a man of a very kind heart and of a generous nature. Few men of historic size were ever so

ready for self-sacrifice—self, in the form of property, position, service—all were at the use of the needy and destitute. Human sympathy was large, reaching out into the mission field among the Indians and toward all needy and suffering souls. He interpreted every form of human weakness, sin and depravity in terms of conscience liberty—an idealism peculiar to himself and the men he sought to save. Providence was made an asylum for sin-sick and soul-sick men and women. Mr. Williams invited all such to come and find a common shelter under the protecting shadows of this wave-washed wilderness.

There was another great and masterful faculty of Mr. Williams that stood him in good stead in his earlier life. It was the spirit of ready and genuine forgiveness of real or fancied wrongs and wrong-doers. His fighting nature made many enemies and brought him into difficult straits. His physical sufferings were not to be compared with the mental in the trials through which he passed from first to last, most of which were the product of an arrogant self-will or a mortifiable self-conceit. It is a singular fact in the story of Mr. Williams' life that he seems to review adverse events as just and the actors in them as friends against whom he cherishes no ill-will nor revenge. His banishment from Massachusetts is an instance of this sort. Whenever speaking of it he seems to justify his judges and one of them, Gov. John Winthrop, he treasures for years as his honored and loving friend and advisor, with whom he carries on a constant and a confiding correspondence until Gov. Winthrop's death. Self-esteem and self-assertion, or self-confidence with a fair measure of personal courage to the point of actual physical injury, constitute added qualities which came into full play in Mr. Williams' experiences as a Colonial Peacemaker. It can readily be seen that Mr. Williams was not a man of the world—of worldly build. He was not a business man and his statesmanship was peculiar, original, impractical. His mind held fast the theologic attitude, common to his time, especially among men who had some scholarly training. His uncertainty as to creeds, forms and sacraments unfitted him for the pulpit at a time when orthodoxy allowed no apologists and liberalism had few disciples. These conditions of mind, heart and training made it difficult for Mr. Williams to align himself with the secular or religious movements of his time. The title which he adopted, "Seeker," expresses most perfectly his attitude as to life and its problems and that word would be an affix to his name—ROGER WILLIAMS, SEEKER.

Mr. Williams' generous nature found expression in his plan to become a missionary to the Indians. "My soul's desire was to do the natives good, and to that end have their language and therefore desired not to be troubled with English company." Gov. Winthrop advised Mr.

Williams to betake himself to the Indian country, for while a minister at Plymouth, he had made the acquaintance of Massassoit and Canonicus, studying the language and modes of life of the Indians of the two tribes on Narragansett Bay. Mr. Williams had won the friendship of the chiefs by his interest in their tribal affairs as well as by gifts of varied sorts, which easily won their favor. Having gained their confidence, Mr. Williams undertook the difficult task of learning the Indian language which involved to some extent the teaching the chiefs the rudiments of English. Scant credit has been given Mr. Williams for this original study of language, life and characters. That he was a clever student appears in an observation made of the Indians. "For the temper of the braine in quick apprehension and accurate judgments, to say no more, the most high and Sovereign God and Creator hath not made them inferior to Europeans."

Concerning the general pacifist nature of Mr. Williams, his letters are the best evidence, especially those that he wrote in a frendly and confidential spirit to the two Governors Winthrop, father and son, one of Massachusetts, the other of Connecticut, covering the period of his active years at Providence.

The first test of Mr. Williams' loyalty to the Colonies and of his earnest efforts to save the infant settlements from destruction by the united Mohawk and Pequot tribes, occurred in 1637. We have already seen that Mr. Williams had made friends of the Narragansetts both for himself and for the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In his first letter to Gov. Winthrop, he says: "Concerning natives, the Pequots and Niantics resolve to live and die together, and not to yield up one." A few days later he writes, that the Pequots and Mohawks have entered into a league against the white settlers and that they have slain many of the Connecticut planters. He calls the Mohawks "mad dogs, cannibals," and hopes "the Most High will put his hook into their nose;" \* \* \* "they are most savage, their weapons more dangerous, and their cruelty dreadful, roasting alive, &c. \* \* \* Sir, I may not forget due thanks for your intended requittals of my poor endeavors towards the barbarous; if it please the Lord to use so dull a tool, *satis superque*, &c." Under date of May 1637, Mr. Williams wrote to Boston, stating that Miantonomi was friendly but that "Canonicus (*Morosus acque ae barbarex senex*) was very sour and accused the English and myself for sending the plague amongst them, and threatening to kill him especially. Such tidings were brought to his ears by some of his flatterers and our ill-willers. I discerned cause of bestirring myself, and staid the longer, and at last (through the mercy of the Most High) I not only sweetened his spirits, but persuaded him that the plague and other sicknesses were alone in the hand of the one God," and that such troubles fell upon English and Indians alike. At the same

time, Mr. Williams offers a plan of campaign against the Pequots, which he had obtained from the Narragansetts, with a drawing of the fort and defenses of the Nyantics, Pequots and Mohawks. He suggests that Canonicus "would gladly accept of a box of eight or ten pounds of sugar—a box full." In a letter of May 23, 1637, Mr. Williams tells Massachusetts that the Narragansetts are "doubtful of reality in all our promises," urges speed against the Pequots, and requests beads, coats and sugar be sent to the Sachems, as tokens of friendship. On June 2, he writes of a visit to the Narragansetts and learns of the victory won by the English at the Pequot Fort, the destruction of a great portion of the warriors of the tribe and the flight of the remnant to the Mohawks, west of the Connecticut River. It was prior to this battle that Mr. Williams made the difficult and dangerous journey to the Narragansetts, staying among the savages for three days, at the risk of his life, to prevent the union of the Narragansetts with the Pequots, Mohawks, Nipmucks and other tribes in a confederate hostile attack upon the English. This event may be properly termed the crisis in the history of the New England Colonies, and when we compare the fighting power of the Indians of New England, excepting the Wampanoags in treaty relations with Plymouth, with the scattered English settlers, we can readily understand that the probabilities were on the side of the Indians, in the annihilation of the white colonists, concentrated at Boston and Plymouth. Whatever may have been the issue, slaughter and extermination or both, the Rhode Island historian must accord to Mr. Williams the honor of having prevented the Narragansetts from entering the savage combine and of reducing the threatened danger to its lowest terms.

Mr. Williams closes his letter, "beseeching the God of Peace to be at peace with us." Under date of June 21, he writes to Boston: "I understand it would be very grateful to our neighbors (the Narragansetts) that such Pequots as fall to them be not enslaved, like those taken in war; but (as they say is their usual custom) be used kindly, have houses, and goods, and fields given them, because they voluntarily choose to come into them, and if not received, will go to the enemy or turn wild Irish themselves." Here we see the spirit of the Teacher, who said, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." Another letter to Gov. Winthrop requests him to bring up an Indian child. "I have fixed mine eye on this little one with<sup>o</sup> the red cord about his neck." Again he writes: "Tis true there is no fear of God before their eyes, and all the cords that even bound the Barbarians to Foreigners were made of self and covetousness, yet if I mistake not I observe in Miantonomi some sparks of true friendship, could it be deeply imprinted into him that the English never intended to despoil him of the country, I probably conjecture his friendship would appear in attending of us with 500 men (in case he is wanted)

against a foreign enemy." \* \* \* "I shall desire to attend with my poor help to discover any perfidious dealing, and shall desire the revenge of it for a common good and peace."

The autumn of 1638 was occupied with business and peace negotiations between the tribes and the Colonies of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut and Mr. Williams was employed as interpreter and counsellor on behalf of the Indians. "Conduct like this," says Prof. William Gamwell, "in vindication of the rights of the natives, and in promoting the peace and happiness of all the inhabitants of the country, did not fail to secure the abiding confidence of the Indian Sachems. In every question that arose between them and the English, Williams was made their adviser and often became the mediator between the parties."

Under date of May 9, 1639, Mr. Williams writes to "his much honored and beloved Mr. John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts:"

I am requested by Canonicus and Miantonomi to present you with their love and respect, \* \* \* as also with this expression of the continuance of their love unto you, *viz.*, thirty fathoms of beads (ten from Canonicus and twenty from Miantonomi) and the basket, a present from Miantonomi's wife to your dear companion, Mrs. Winthrop; three things they request me to desire of you.

First, the continuance of your ancient and constant friendship toward them, and good opinion of their sincere affection for the English. \* \* \* That they have always (and shall still) succor the English in any distresses, etc.

Secondly, that you would please to ratify that promise made to them after the wars, *viz.*: The free use of the Pequot country for their hunting, etc.

The third request was that they be allowed "to pursue those Pequot Princes & Captains" still annoying them, adding a postscript, "Canonicus begs of you a little sugar."

Pequot troubles still continue to annoy the Narragansetts and Mr. Williams, whose sympathies are strongly with the Narragansetts as against their ancient enemies. He counsels kindness and "doubts whether any other use of war and arms be lawful to the professors of the Lord Jesus, but in execution of justice upon malefactors at home or preserving life or lives in defensive warfare." Here we find good Quaker doctrine at the base of Mr. Williams' pacific labors. "If the sword rages in Old or New England, I know who gives out the commissions, and can arm frogs, flies, lice, etc. He be pleased to give us peace which earth neither gives nor takes." Mr. Williams' peace and non-resistance principles appear most conclusively in his letter to Gov. Winthrop about 1641, concerning the dreadful things Samuel Gorton was doing at Providence, closing with, "Yet the tide is too strong against us, and I fear (if the

framer of Hearts help not) it will force me to little Patience, a little isle next to your Prudence."

In 1643 Mr. Williams made his voyage to England, returning with the first Charter in 1644. During this absence he published the work which will be the most durable monument to his name, "A Key to the Language of the Narragansetts." This work is evidence, conclusive, of Mr. Williams' intimacy with the Rhode Island tribes and the mutual confidence established, enabling him to make the cause of the Indians, especially the Narragansetts, his own. He was the protector of the Colonies on the one hand and the friendly Indians on the other, and thereby a blessing and a saving force to both.

During the absence of Roger Williams, one of the most distressing events of early New England history occurred—the tragic death of Miantonomi, the Junior Sachem of the Narragansetts. Nearly three centuries have passed since the event and the judgments of competent students are as variant on the justice or injustice of the death sentence as were the parties involved in the struggle. The judicial mind is called upon to exercise an extra judicial attitude in respect to unknown conditions and unverifiable evidence, on which a just verdict should be rendered. There was but one man in all the world capable of a just judgment or equal to the task of averting the train of circumstances that led to the assassination of Miantonomi, the great Sachem of the Narragansetts. That man was Roger Williams, for whose friendly advice and assistance the Sachem pleaded in vain, for an ocean separated them. The facts are simple, the causes, motives, judgments are complex.

A war broke out between Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans and Sequasson, a sachem on the Connecticut River, an ally of the Narragansetts. Miantonomi joined his ally against his ancient enemy. Both parties appealed to the English who declared their neutrality in the fight. The Narragansetts, who were bound to Massachusetts by a treaty, asked through their warchief, "To know if the Governor would be offended if war was made on the Mohegans." Governor Winthrop replied: "If the Uncas had done him or his friends wrong and would not give satisfaction, we should leave him to take his own course." The war began with an attack by Uncas, when Miantonomi with one thousand warriors took the field and met with defeat in a bloody fight. The Narragansett chief was captured through the treachery of two of his captains and was delivered to Uncas as a captive. Gorton united with the Narragansetts to obtain his ransom, when Uncas took his royal prisoner to Hartford and on Miantonomi's entreaty he was left in the hands of the English until the meeting of the Commissioners of the United Colonies at Boston. The court of the four allied colonies met at Boston, John Winthrop presiding, September 16, 1643. At this session the case of Uncas against Miantonomi was

the chief business. No witnesses were examined, no evidence presented, no counsel heard as to the guilt or innocence of the party on trial for his life. Certain general allegations were made as to Miantonomi's hostility to the English,—“his treacherous plotts by gifts to engage all the Indians at once to cutt off the whole body of the English in these parts.” His plots against the life of Uncas, his treacherous attack upon Uncas with a thousand men, his refusal of a duel with Uncas “to end the quarrel and spare blood,” his alliance with the blood-thirsty Mohawks to attack the English, as soon as he was at liberty,—these and other charges occupied the minds of the eight commissioners of the New England Colonies for a day. Their decision, which seemed to have been unanimous, was as follows: “These things being duly weighed and considered, the commissioners apparently see the Uncas cannot be safe while Myantenomo lives, but that either by secret treachery or open force his life will be still in danger. Wherefore, they thinke he may justly put such a false and blood-thirsty enemie to death, but in his owne jurisdiction, not in the English plantacions. And advising that in the manner of his death all mercy and moderacion be shewed, contrary to the practise of the Indians who exercise torture and cruelty.” Other records state that the court “called in five of the most judicious elders and propounding the case to them they all agreed that he ought to be put to death.” Thus, by extra-judicial and ecclesiastical authority, Miantonomi was condemned to die at the hands of his captor. Mr. Arnold says, “The sentence was executed in its spirit and letter by the savage Uncas. Thus fell the most powerful of the native princes and the most faithful and honorable ally with whom the English had ever dealt. Unskilled in theological subtleties, he received all alike with a noble charity which might be called Christian. \* \* \* To him and to his uncle, the sage Canonicus, who survived him four years, Rhode Island owes more than to all others, Christian or heathen, for the preservation of the lives of her founders.”

All this is true and more can be said in truthful fidelity. The two great sachems for the Narragansetts were the saviours of the New England Colonies in the extreme peril of the Pequot War. But for Roger Williams, the alliance would have been completed between the Mohawks, the Pequots and the allied tribes of the Narragansetts. The Mohegans and the Wampanoags were too feeble to have resisted the great tribes of the Confederates, and the English had less than 2,000 fighting men, separated by wide wilderness distances, familiar to savage life and warfare. The pleadings of the philanthropist won the hearts of the sage Canonicus and fighting chieftain Miantonomi, and the lands and homes of the Puritan and the Pilgrim were saved from a war of threatened extermination.

In a letter from Mr. Williams to the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1651, he says: “Please you to remember that ever

since the time of my exile, I have been (through God's help) a professed and known servant to this colony and all the colonies of the English in peace and war. So that scarce a week hath passed but some way or other I have been used as instrumental to the peace and spreading of the English plantings in this country.

"In the Pequot troubles, receiving letters from this (Massachusetts) government, I have hazarded my life into extreme dangers, by laboring to prevent the league between the Pequots and the Narragansetts, which work as an agent from this colony and all the English in the land, I (through the help of God) effected the first thereof (as our much honored Mr. Winthrop, deceased, wrote to me) hath been peace to the English ever since." In another letter, Mr. Williams wrote, "It hath pleased the Most High to carry me on eagles' wings, through mighty labors, mighty hazards, mighty sufferings \* \* \* in many of my trials and sufferings, both amongst the English and barbarians." In another letter to the General Court of the Bay, Mr. Williams wrote, "It pleased your honored government to employ me in the hazardous and weighty service of negotiating a league between yourselves and the Narragansetts, where the Pequot messengers, who sought the Narragansetts' league against the English, had almost ended my work and life together. \* \* \* In all your great transactions of war or peace, between the English and the natives, I have not spared purse, nor pains, nor hazards (very many times) that the whole land, English and natives, might sleep in peace securely."

In 1654, rumors were abroad that the Bay Colony was meditating a war against the Narragansetts. Hearing the report, Mr. Williams writes a long and particular letter to the General Court in the interests of peace and in defence of what he calls the home tribes. Several quotations from this remarkable letter will show Mr. Williams' views as to war and the proper treatment of the native tribes. He says, "I never was against the righteous use of the civil sword of men or nations: \* \* \* I pray your consideration, whether it be not only possible, but very easy to live and die in peace with all the natives of this country. \* \* \* Hath not the God of Peace and the Father of Mercies made these natives more friendly in this, than our native country in our own land to us? \* \* \* Have they not entered leagues of love, and to this day continued peaceable commerce with us? \* \* \* I have been and am a friend to the natives turning to civility and Christianity. \* \* \* The Narragansetts and Mohawks are the two great bodies of Indians in this country, and they are confederates and long have been, and they both are yet friendly and peaceable to the English. \* \* \* The Narragansetts, as they were the first, so they have been long confederates with you; they have been true in all the Pequot Wars to you. They occasioned the Mohegans to come in, too, and so occasioned the Pequots' downfall. \* \* \* I cannot yet

learn, that ever it pleased the Lord, to permit the Narragansetts to stain their hands with any English blood, neither in open hostilities nor secret murders, as both Pequots and Long Islanders did and Mohegans also, in the Pequot Wars. \* \* \* For the people, many hundred English, have experimented (proved) them to be inclined to peace and love with the English nation. \* \* \* Their late famous long-lived Canonicus so lived and died and in the same most honorable manner and solemnity (in their way) as you laid to sleep your prudent peacemaker, Mr. Winthrop, did they honor this, their prudent and peaceable prince. \* \* \* We have been esteemed by some of you as your thorny hedge on this side of you; if so, yet as a hedge to be maintained; if as out-sentinels, yet not to be discouraged." \* \* \*

The following quotations are taken from Mr. Williams' letters, subsequent to 1660. "Public peace and love is better than abundance of corn and cattle." "My humble desires are to contribute my poor mite (as I have ever and hope I ever shall) to preserve plantation and public interest of the whole of New England and not interest of this or that town, colony, opinion, etc." "The natives of this Bay as (by promise to them at my first breaking of the ice in amongst them) expect my endeavors of preserving the public peace, which it hath pleased God, mercifully to help me to do many times (with my great hazard and charge) when all the Colonies and the Massachusetts, in especial, have meditated, prepared and been (sometimes many hundred) among the march for war against the natives in this Colony." "Barbarians are barbarians, \* \* \* they are a melancholy people (and judge themselves by the former Sachem and these English (Warwick) oppressed and wronged; you may knock out their brains and yet not make them peaceably to surrender, even as some oxen will die before they will rise; yet with patience and gentle means will rise and draw and do good service. Lastly, sir, we profess Christianity, which commends a little with peace; a dinner of green herbs with quietness, and if it be possible, commands peace with all men."

One other quotation from Mr. Williams' letters will conclude his own testimony as to his services in the protection of the English Colonies. It is from a long letter to Major Mason, under date of Providence, June 22, 1670, found in Vol. VI, Narragansett Clubs Col. To those desiring a clear insight into Mr. Williams' character and attitude toward the Colonies in his later years, this letter is commended as a valuable study, illustrating as it does the changed views which his life's rough experiences have wrought in him.

When the next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequot War against the country, in which, Sir, the Lord made

yourself, with others, a blessed instrument of peace to all New England, I had my share of service to the whole land in that Pequot business, inferior to very few that acted, for—

1. Upon letters received from the Governor and Council at Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequots against the Mohegans, and the Pequots against the English \* \* \* the Lord helped me to put my life into my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself, all alone, in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the Sachem's house.

2. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequot ambassadors, whose hands and arms, methought, wreaked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut River, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own breast also.

3. When God wondrously preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces the Pequot's negotiations and design, and to make and promote and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansetts and Mohegans against the Pequots, and that the English forces marched up to the Narragansett country against the Pequots, I gladly entertained, at my house in Providence, General Israel Stoughton (of Massachusetts) and his officers.

4. I marched up with them to the Narragansett Sachems, and brought my countrymen and the barbarians, Sachems and Captains, to a mutual confidence and complacence each in other.

Mr. Williams states in this letter that Governor Winthrop and others of the Council of the Bay Colony favored his recall from banishment and the bestowal of other favors. It is a matter of record that Governor William Bradford, of Plymouth, credited Mr. Williams with averting a general Indian war at that time.

Palfrey says, Sassaeus, Sachem of the Pequots, attempted an alliance with the Narragansetts to exterminate all the English settlements in New England. "There was great probability that he would succeed; had he been able to conciliate the Narragansetts, and to enlist or overawe the Mohegans, there was no power in the Colonies to make head against him, and the days of civilized New England would have been numbered and finished near their beginning. The ancient hostility prevailed, enforced by the diplomacy of Roger Williams, who, at the hazard of his life, visited their settlement to counteract the solicitations with which they were addressed. Determined by his influence, some of the Narragansett chiefs came to Boston and concluded a treaty of peace and alliance with the Colonists."

The historian Bancroft says, "The Pequots sought the alliance of the Narragansetts and Mohegans. The general rising against the Colonists could be frustrated by none but Roger Williams, who was the first to

give information of the impending danger. \* \* \* The Narragansetts were wavering, but Roger Williams succeeded in dissolving the conspiracy. It was the most intrepid achievement of the War."

The historian Arnold says, "Right was on the side of the Pequots. \* \* \* The truthful eloquence of the Pequots seemed about to prevail in the wavering council of the Narragansetts. At this inimical crisis Roger Williams appeared among them. He was the only man in New England who could avert the impending evil."



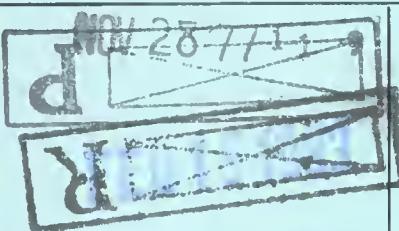






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